

## Other People's Books

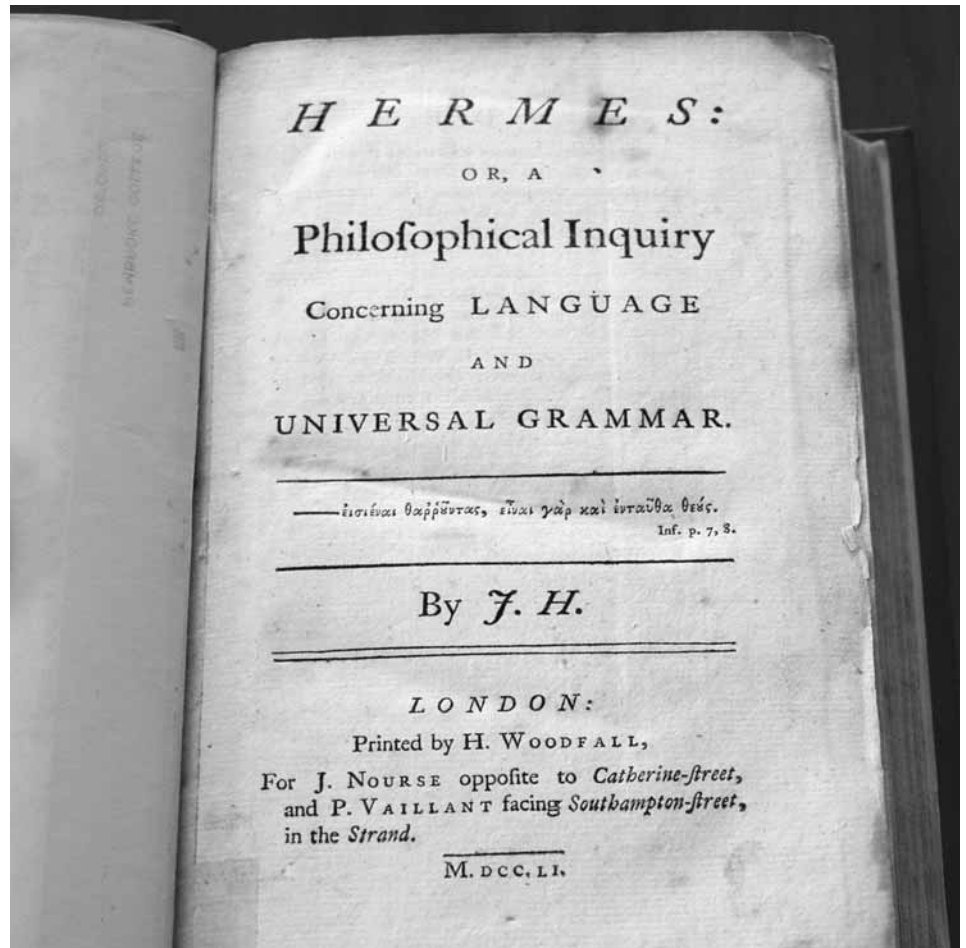
Association copies and another pleasure of collecting

Paul T. Ruxin

The collecting impulse traces a broad path through humanity. Our concern, however, is only with its manifestation as an obsession with books. Others might build deeply loved collections of Elvis memorabilia, or school lunch boxes, or Barbie dolls. Ours, we like to think, is a higher calling. Indeed, the pleasures of bibliophilia are both numerous and great. According to The Rowfant Club formulation, it is books "in their various capacities to please the mind of man" that captivate us. The pages of the Caxtonian have been graced recently by essays from our member Eden Martin, taking us on a bibliographic tour of the works of Whitman and Poe, compliments of his own collections, and illustrated with images of some of his books. Among the highlights of Mr. Martin's collections are some "association" copies, books whose prior owners include individuals of interest to readers, or collectors, for their connection to the author or in their own right.

Association copies are themselves a broad sub-species of bibliophilia, one distinctly different from collecting fine bindings, or focusing on typography or paper-making, or books-about-books. In the ordinary course I would guess that few collectors begin with the notion of building a collection of association copies. More often, I suppose, it happens as it happened to me. First I found a subject, a group of writers, and collecting "their" books, the ones they had written, led me to collecting "their" books, the ones they owned.

My own collection is small in quantity—early and rare editions of Samuel Johnson, James Boswell, Oliver Goldsmith, Hester Lynch Salusbury Thrale Piozzi, and their circle. After nearly thirty years of collecting,



Johnson held a low opinion of James Harris's *Hermes*, but possessed a copy nonetheless.

little I covet now becomes available, and often what does is one-of-a-kind, and I find myself in competition, out of my league, with, say, Harvard, or a fellow Johnsonian named, not coincidentally, Rothschild. My hunger unabated, I have necessarily expanded my focus by reducing it, and now I assiduously read the catalogues of dealers and auction houses and wait for tips and calls searching for association copies of books (most of which I already have) from the Johnson circle.

It is stimulating in more ways than one; for example, it stimulates me to keep working to better support my habit. But it is also stimulating physically and intellectually. For example, in 1751 when Samuel Johnson was compiling (really creating) his monumental *Dictionary of the English Language* a man he actually did not much admire, James Harris, published *Hermes: or, a Philosophical Inquiry Concerning Language and Universal Grammar*. Johnson observed

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## CAXTONIAN

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# A Message from the President

Last year was an active one for the Caxton Club. We prepared for a major traveling exhibition, launched a program to visit members' private libraries, added a record number of new members (twenty-five), and started planning for two projects that I hope will increase our visibility to everyone in Chicago's book collecting community. The 2004-5 season promises to be equally active, and I hope all members will choose to become involved.

For more than a year the Exhibitions and Publications Committees have been planning a major traveling exhibition of leaf books that will commemorate the centennial of our own publication, in 1905, of E. Gordon Duff's *William Caxton*, containing an original leaf of Caxton's first printed edition of *Canterbury Tales* (c. 1477). The exhibition defines a leaf book as a modern publication containing both an original specimen of an earlier printed or manuscript book and some didactic material about that book. Leaf books have been criticized by librarians, curators, and even some collectors because they entail the breaking and dissemination of gatherings taken from earlier and almost inevitably significant materials. The exhibition will explore these criticisms in depth, along with the benefits provided by leaf books to collectors and educators, and it will open at the Newberry Library in April, 2005. Thereafter it will travel to the San Francisco Public Library, the Houghton Library at Harvard University, and the Lilly Library at Indiana University.

Less auspicious but no less interesting have been the newly established Sunday afternoon visits by members to other members' private libraries. This year we visited the Boswell and Johnson collection of Paul Ruxin and the Americana collection of John Blew. These afternoons are pleasant collegial affairs complete with wine, *hors d'oeuvres*, and lots of conversation about books and book collecting. We're looking for new libraries to visit in the coming year, and everyone is encouraged to participate either as a host or guest.

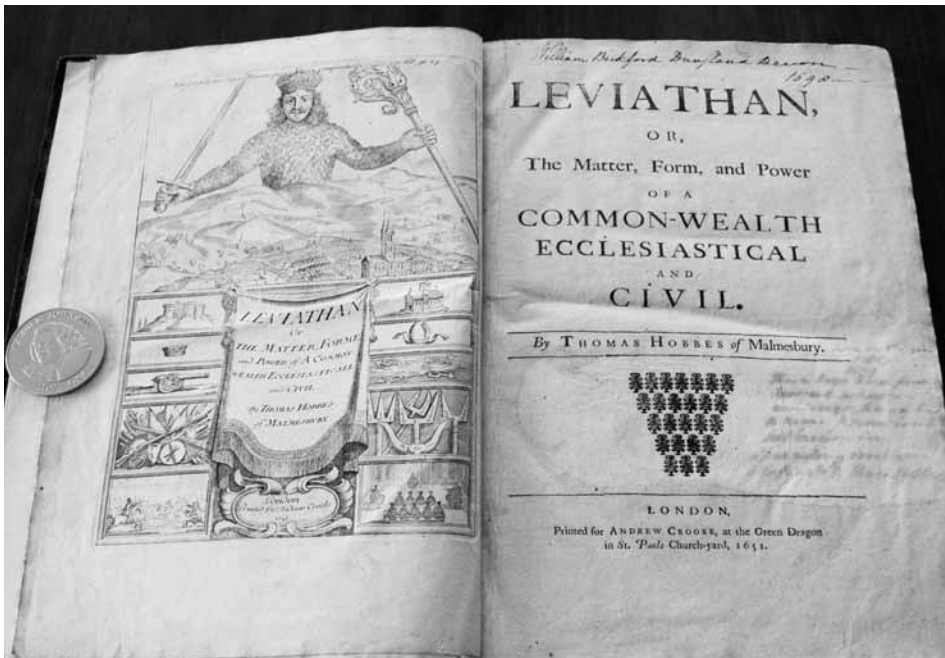
We've also been working on a creating a relationship with the area's only library school, the Graduate School of Library and Information

Science at Dominican University, as a counterpart to our scholarship program for students at the Columbia College Center for the Book and Paper Arts. The Council approved funding for an initial arrangement under which selected library students at Dominican, who have taken book history and special collections course work, can attend Caxton Club dinner meetings at our expense to meet us, and we them. This program will bring some fresh faces into our meetings (although with our record number of new memberships there's no shortage of fresh faces) and we hope it will encourage the study and appreciation of rare and fine books by nascent librarians.

Finally, we've begun planning for a periodic lecture series to be held in Chicago covering the history of early printing and focusing on the prominent role played by William Caxton as a printer, translator, editor, and entrepreneur. We hope to engage noted scholars presenting publishable papers to an audience comprising both Caxtonians and members of the public. This will require a considerable amount of creative time and effort, and a not inconsiderable level of financial support, but it promises to be a good way for us to advance the scholarship surrounding the history of printing and to participate actively and visibly in Chicago's intellectual life.

There are many members to thank for the success of these and all the other activities the Club has undertaken in the past year (the *Caxtonian*, the website, the Nobel Committee, the dinner programs, the luncheons, etc.). Space does not permit me to name them all. Suffice it to say that all the committee chairs, officers, council members, and other members who serve on committees have played a significant role in making the past year an eventful and exciting one, and they all deserve our heart-felt thanks. More work is ahead, however, and I encourage anyone who wishes to play an active role in the Club's affairs to contact me or any committee or council members to volunteer. The Club is only as strong as its membership, and with that in mind our Club is very strong indeed.

—Michael Thompson



Johnson regarded Hobbes as morally dangerous, but still had a copy of his *Leviathan*.

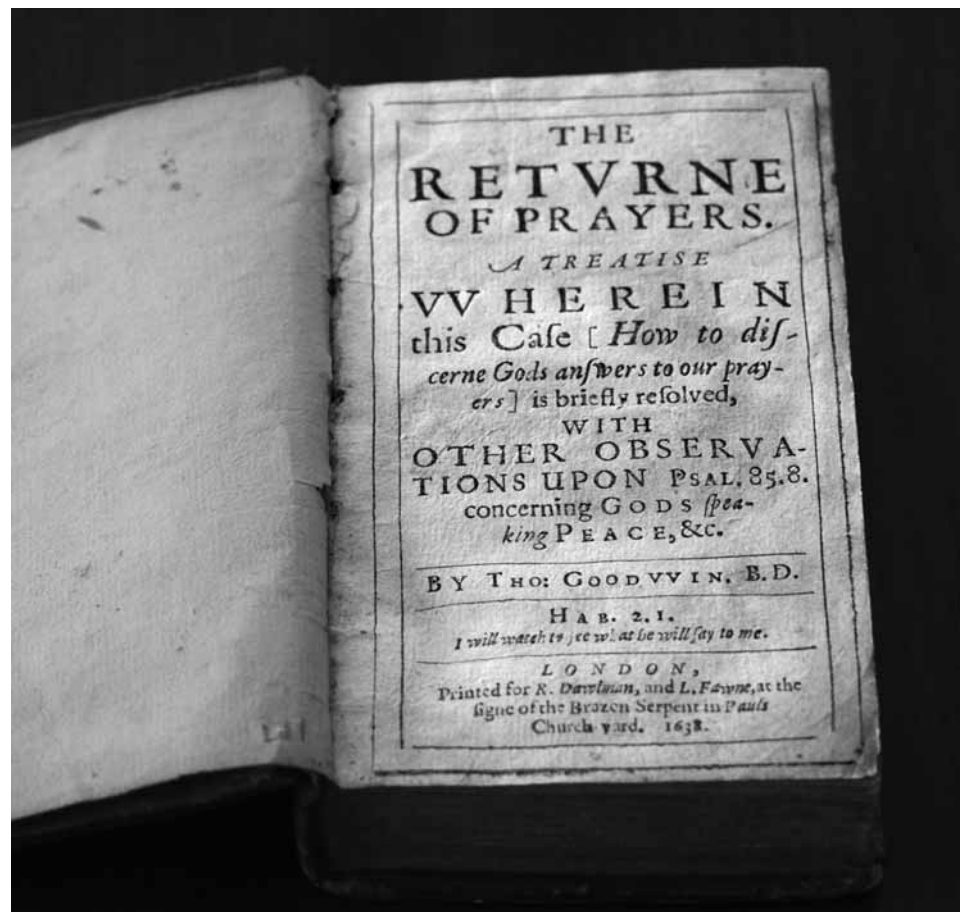
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that the dedication to that book, “though but fourteen lines long . . . [had] six grammatical faults in it.” While Johnson admitted Harris was “a sound sullen scholar,” he also felt he was “a prig and a bad prig. I looked into his book, and thought he did not understand his own system.” Yes, Johnson “looked into his book,” even as he was working on his own great book, the *Dictionary*. The very copy of *Hermes* that Johnson “looked into” is mine now. You may imagine, perhaps better than I can describe, the physical sensation of sitting in my library, surrounded by various editions of Johnson’s *Dictionary*, and holding in my hands the very volume Johnson himself consulted while drafting the famous “Preface” to those dictionaries, and his introductory articles about English grammar and etymology. Having Johnson’s *Hermes* also stimulates my own search through his balanced and elegant Johnsonian sentences for traces, hints, of the same thoughts, perhaps originally expressed in the more straightforward prose of Harris. Stimulation indeed, of many of the senses—including, of course, the sense of smell, attuned to the scent of 250-year-old paper and leather.

There is an undeniable pleasure in owning a 1651 first edition of Thomas Hobbes’ *Leviathan, or, The Matter, Form and Power of a Common-Wealth*

*Ecclesiastical and Civil*. Hobbes was regarded by Johnson as morally dangerous, and rather than include Hobbes’ own words in the 114,000 quotations in the *Dictionary*,

Boswell’s copy of Goodwin’s *The Return of Prayers*.



he quoted extensively from John Bramhall, surely a thinker and writer of less significance than Hobbes, referring to Bramhall’s frequent refutations of Hobbes. Johnson even quotes Richard Bentley, a lesser writer than even Bramhall, to illustrate the definition of “scribble”:

If a man should affirm, that an ape casually meeting with pen, ink and paper, and falling to scribble, did happen to write exactly the *Leviathan* of Hobbes, would an atheist believe such a story? And yet he can easily digest things as incredible as that.

What a complex pleasure it is then to have in my library, as I do, Johnson’s own copy of that very despised *Leviathan*.

Perhaps the appeal of association copies can be better expressed by spending a little more time with a few others. Let us begin with a book by Thomas Goodwin, entitled *The Returne of Prayers: a treatise wherein* See ASSOCIATION COPIES, page 4



The Return of Prayers was a small volume, and may well have spent much time in Boswell's pocket.

ASSOCIATION COPIES, from page 3  
 this case [How to discern Gods answers to our prayers] is briefly resolved. A copy of the fifth edition, published in 1638 in London, 141 years later, in 1779, came into the possession of James Boswell, in Edinburgh. We know this because it is signed and dated in his distinctive hand on the free front flyleaf. To understand what this book—a frequent resident of Boswell's pockets—suggests about Boswell, perhaps we need a slight refresher course in who he was.

Of course he was the famous biographer of Samuel Johnson, but he was much more than that. A complex and contradictory life is sometimes best illuminated by small insights, such as the ones provided by Boswell's devotion to an old book offering reassurance of the efficacy of prayer and its constant availability both as a source of solace and of hope for a better life, not only in the hereafter, but in this world. James Boswell was born in 1740, scion of an ancient and noble Scots line, whose family had held the estates of Auchinleck, in

Ayrshire, since the 14th century. His father, Alexander, was a distinguished jurist who sat on the highest civil and criminal courts of Scotland. Boswell himself was a lawyer, and an author, long before 1791, when his famous *Life of Samuel Johnson* was published. In fact his first book, an account of his travels to Corsica, made him famous in 1768 when he was only 28 years old; published to great success, it was translated almost immediately into five languages. He was, even by the lofty standards of the time, highly educated, a master of many languages and famous as a wit, a social butterfly, a skillful advocate, a politician, and also as an intemperate drunk, a debauched profligate, and an ambitious man always at work defeating his own ambitions.

Among his most consistently pursued, and consistently undermined, ambitions, was to be pious. A staunch Scots Presbyterian, he flirted with Roman Catholicism in his youth, then attended Protestant church services regularly in

England and Scotland, where he was often moved to tears. He repented his sins deeply, but frequently, because he was in fact better at remorse than he was at reform. Boswell was torn by his own need for salvation, and by profound self-knowledge that led him to fear it would, in the end, be denied him. The late Prof. Frederick Pottle, of Yale, known as "Boswellianissimus," explains his dilemma and his appeal to us this way:

There is nothing painful in the autobiography either of a saint or of a complacent libertine. John Wesley's Journal is not painful, nor does one suffer as he reads the Memoirs of Casanova. We can stand apart from such men and judge their lives as we would works of pure fiction. But Boswell's Journal is painful to read, because, while we are laughing with him and at him, the scales fall from our eyes and we come suddenly to see that he is ourselves. He is the articulate honest expression of that state of being which nearly all of us experience: of piety that seldom issues in righteousness; of primordial indecencies mocking our boast of civilization; of ambitions misdirected beyond our strength; of warring motives which can never be reconciled; of childish dreams carried over into mature life. Like him we do our best work half-heartedly while we pursue phantoms; we spend our lives in turmoil and heartache, lacking the power to shape our destinies.

Reading Boswell's journals and his recitations of his hopes for his children, his desires to excel, to be faithful to his beloved wife, interspersed with his accounts of whoring and drunkenness, it is clear how this little book was a source of comfort. It was, no doubt, a physical as well as spiritual bridge that allowed him to cross quickly back from the depths of his worst self, to the peaks of his better hours. Reading it we can consider one source of his continually renewed optimism, his eternal hope and his belief that it is never too late to become better. The object itself, always within his literal grasp in his pocket, was, we can believe, a physical comfort to this tormented man.

Now, for the solution of a bibliographic mystery of 215 years' standing, we turn to another book of Boswell's, this time one he wrote, his 1785 *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides with Samuel Johnson, LL.D.* In 1773 Boswell and Johnson had undertaken a strenuous trip to the western islands of Scotland. Both kept journals, and Johnson turned his immediately into a book, published in 1775. Boswell, always intending to write Johnson's biography, published his only after Johnson's death in 1784, as a preview of what was already promised to the public, realizing that it would take him years to complete the larger work. Boswell's *Journal* was a great success—it captured Johnson's wit and powers of observation, as well as Boswell's, and it reflected the wide range of their conversations, many of which, you might guess, were about books and people they both knew.

Among the people much on Johnson's mind during this journey to the wilds of Hebrides, where English was often only a second language and crude huts or the outdoors frequent lodgings, were Henry and Hester Thrale. Henry was a wealthy brewer and member of Parliament, and he and his wife Hester had "adopted" the widower Johnson in 1764. They gave him his own room in their country seat at Streatham, and Johnson spent many days and nights there, almost a member of the family. The Thrales nurtured him, and he revered them. Henry Thrale was an educated man, although not a scholar, with considerable social and intellectual polish and great financial resources. Hester was a remarkable woman, also well educated—although never in school. She was a social lioness, a woman whose salon was enlarged and made famous by the frequent presence of Johnson. She nursed him when he was ill, and he confided his hopes and fears, as well as his opinions, to her.

This was an era when the Blue Stockings held sway over London society. They were a remarkable group of women, mostly wealthy and aristocratic, who were also writers, or close to the world of literature and the arts. At their evenings card-playing was forbidden, and good conversation the featured entertainment. The most famous people in London frequented their rooms,

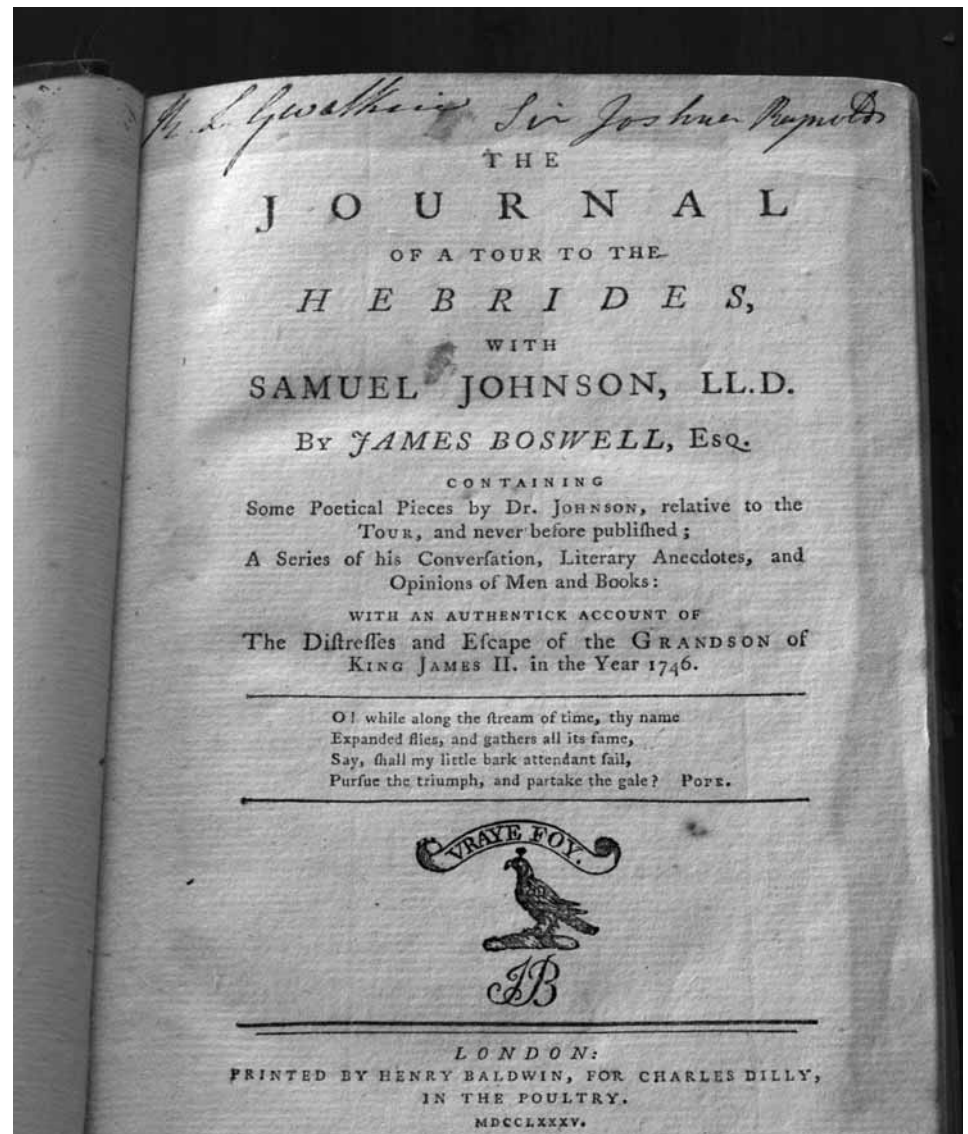
including politicians as important as Edmund Burke, artists as renowned as Sir Joshua Reynolds, the great actor David Garrick, and others of similar reputation. The bluest of the Blue Stockings was Elizabeth Robinson Montagu, of ancient lineage, great wealth, and social position. She was also the author, in 1768, of a much-discussed essay on Shakespeare. Hester Thrale and Mrs. Montagu were friends, but rivals. They were famous for their conversation; others would come to Mrs. Montagu's evenings just to hear them talk to each other. It was no secret that Johnson's devotion was one of Hester Thrale's few advantages over Mrs.

Montagu.

So it went, until 1781, when Henry Thrale died. The Thrale marriage had been an arranged one, and largely happy, but one with more respect than love on both sides. Hester had given birth to twelve children in eighteen years, only five of whom survived their father's death. These five daughters were tutored in music by an Italian singer and composer, Gabriel Piozzi, who had become a fixture in the Thrale household. More than that, he had fallen in love with Hester, and she with him. It was impossible, unthinkable. An Italian Catholic music master could not aspire to such a match.

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*Boswell presented an early copy of his Hebrides Journal to the painter Sir Joshua Reynolds. It was missing until 1999, when it surfaced in Gloucestershire.*



More to the point, no one of the widow Thrale's status could possibly so degrade herself. Her friends, especially the novelist Fanny Burney, were horrified. Her daughters, especially the oldest, the accomplished but cold Queeny, were scandalized; and all refused to consent. It was a nightmare for her, as the gossip columns speculated about whether she would marry Dr. Johnson, a father-figure some thirty-two years her senior, and he, unable to imagine she would remarry at all but instead continuing to believe she would devote herself to his increasingly needy care, made demands she could not meet. Finally she bowed to the pressures and sent Piozzi away, back to Italy. She then sank into a depression so deep that, on her doctor's advice, and with her daughters' grudging consent, Piozzi was summoned, and they were quietly married in 1784, to the horror of virtually all who knew them. It marked the end—and a bitter one—of her relationship with Johnson.

Public humiliation and ridicule drove the newlyweds to a lengthy honeymoon in Italy and Europe. Dr. Johnson, feeling abandoned and betrayed, died a few months after the event. The Blue Stockings never mentioned her name except, perhaps, in ridicule or contempt. And then, in 1785 Boswell published his *Journal* of the great Hebrides 1773 adventure. He was a careful reporter. His *Journal* recited, verbatim, many of his conversations with Johnson during their time on the road. He was proud of his skills as an author, and immediately after the trip, showed the manuscript to Johnson and others, including Mrs. Thrale, who returned it with compliments. Now, twelve years later, in 1785, seeing it through the press with editorial advice from his friends, Boswell was careful about what would reach the public. The original manuscript of his *Journal* reported the following exchange one evening on the Isle of Sky:

Boswell: I spoke of Mrs. Montagu's very high

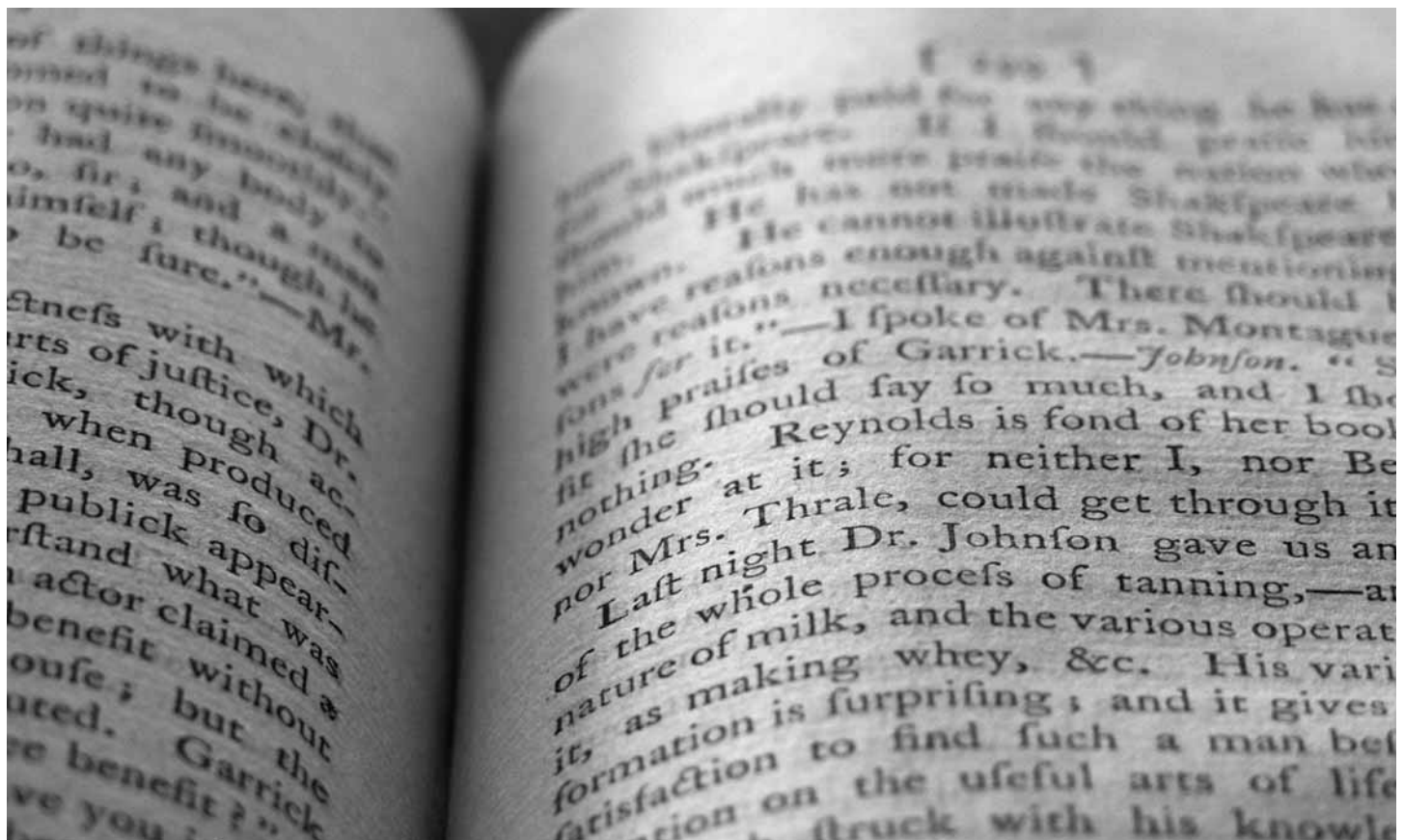
praises of Garrick.

Johnson: Sir, it is fit she should say so much, and I should say nothing. Reynolds is fond of her book, and I wonder at it; for neither I, nor Beauclerk, nor Mrs. Thrale, could get through it.

It was this manuscript that Mrs. Thrale herself had returned to Boswell with praise after reading it, some twelve years earlier. Now, however, she had fallen from grace and was in virtual exile in Europe. Let Boswell describe what happened next:

I had no motive whatever to *invent* it . . . I said . . . "Why should I set two women to pull one another's caps?" Besides had Mrs. Thrale been still in the state she formerly was, I might have been less scrupulous; but now she is under a cloud and may probably desire to have the protection of Mrs. Montagu should she venture to return to

Sheet U6 of Sir Joshua Reynolds's copy of the Hebrides Journal solves a long-standing mystery.



England, it might hurt her.

So Boswell crossed out Mrs. Thrale's name in the manuscript before he sent it to the printer as an act of kindness, although he had been as cruel about her remarriage as anyone, and knew she was a potential rival as a biographer. In conversation with his friends and literary advisors, Edmond Malone and John Courtenay, however, Boswell had second thoughts. Again, Boswell:

Mr. Courtenay, however, insisted that as Dr. Johnson had done Mrs. Thrale the honor to quote her as an authority on taste and to class her with himself and Beauclerk, I had no right to deprive her of such a distinction. . . . I . . . ordered her name to be reinstated.

Indeed the evidence shows this to be true. The deletion of Mrs. Thrale's name can clearly be seen in the surviving manuscript originally sent to the printer, and its insertion in the first proof from the printer, in Boswell's hand, is equally clear. The book was then published, the first edition of the first state, with a print run of about 1500 copies, proclaiming to the world that Mrs. Thrale could not even finish Mrs.

Montagu's book. The Blue Stockings, especially Mrs. Montagu, were livid. Mrs. Thrale, who indeed intended ultimately to return to England, was horrified. Her war with Boswell, which later became highly public, had begun. That, however, is another story. This is a bibliographic one.

This story stems from Boswell's explanation of the publishing history of his *Journal* in a letter he wrote to Malone, and later in a published reply to a published effort by Mrs. Thrale to regain Mrs. Montagu's good graces; although, having seen the original manuscript in 1773, she could not in 1785 exactly deny Johnson's report of her difficulty. First, to Malone in 1786, Boswell described his original uncertainty about including the reference to Mrs. Thrale and his initial decision:

Upon these considerations I struck it [Mrs. Thrale's name] out, and some hundreds of the first edition were actually thrown off without it. Sir Joshua Reynolds' copy has it not.

Then, in the published response to Mrs.

Thrale, he wrote:

When my *Journal* was passing through the press, it occurred to me, that a peculiar delicacy was necessary to be observed in reporting the opinion of one literary lady concerning the performance of another; and I had such scruples on that head, that in the proof sheet I struck out the name of Mrs. Thrale from the paragraph in question, and two or three hundred copies of my book were actually published without it; of these Sir Joshua Reynolds' copy happened to be one, but while the sheet was working off, a friend for whose opinion I have great respect, suggested that I had no right to deprive Mrs. Thrale of the high honor which Dr. Johnson had done her, by stating her opinion along with that of Mr. Beauclerk, as coinciding with, and, as it were, sanctioning his own. That observation appeared to me so weighty and conclusive, that I hastened to the printing house, and as a piece of justice, restored Mrs. Thrale to that place from which a too scrupulous delicacy had excluded her.

There is one problem with all of this. As Prof. Pottle, and R. W. Chapman, the great Johnsonian, have observed, no copy of the first edition has ever been seen *without* Mrs. Thrale's name. Two other respected scholars wrote in 1972 in the periodical *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* that they had advertised widely in bookish papers and journals, but had been unsuccessful in turning up a single copy without the reference to Mrs. Thrale. If indeed "hundreds," or even only "two or three hundred" sheets had been printed that way, out of an edition of 1500, at least one should have survived. The authors speculated that Boswell just didn't really know what the state of the printing process was when he hurried to the printer to put Mrs. Thrale back, and that in fact sheet U6 had not yet been run without her name, and never was except for the first proof. As for the Reynolds' copy, they speculated that perhaps a stray uncorrected proof had been picked up and hurriedly bound in the early copy prepared specifically for Reynolds' review. Alas, they concluded, "Reynolds' copy is not known to be extant," and so the

mystery must remain unsolved.

In 1999 Stephen Weissman of Ximenes Rare Books, in Gloucestershire, England, called me. He had just been offered Sir Joshua Reynolds' copy of Boswell's *Journal*. Would I be interested in having it? Would I? And so the mystery is solved. The book is shown here, inscribed in Reynolds' hand as "From the Author," and signed by Reynolds with his marginal notes. Sheet U6 gives us the answer, and makes the Bibliographical Society authors look prescient. Holding the solution to this mystery in my hands is satisfying indeed. Think what satisfaction there is in having this particular association copy, even beyond the pleasure of reading a copy of Boswell's own book, given to his dear friend, the great Sir Joshua Reynolds.

Perhaps the pleasure association copies provide comes simply from the way they lead us deeper into the general subject that was the original focus of our collecting impulse, along paths we would not otherwise have known to explore. A good example of this is the story of another book, to be told, perhaps, in another *Caxtonian*.

§ §

*This essay, in slightly different form, is part of an address delivered to The Aldus Society of Columbus Ohio in May of 2004. All photographs are of books from the collection of the author, and were taken by Robert McCamant.*

Royal Oak Foundation Lecture:

### OLIVER EVERETT

*A Feast of Treasures and Curiosities: The Contents of the Royal Library, Windsor Castle*

The Royal Library at Windsor Castle is housed in three rooms dating from the 15th to the 17th centuries. It has Old Master drawings, fans, clocks, jewelry, miniature paintings, maps, and the shirt in which King Charles I was executed, as well as fine bindings, literary and Islamic manuscripts, and incunabula. The Library is not open to the general public. Oliver Everett is Librarian Emeritus of the Library.

**Wednesday, September 29** at the Casino Club. Reception at 6, lecture at 6:30, optional dinner after. Courtesy price for Caxton members: \$50 (reception and lecture) or \$125 including dinner. Advance registration by September 24. To register, call Royal Oak at 800/913-6565, ext. 201 or go to the lectures page on the Royal Oak website, [www.royal-oak.org](http://www.royal-oak.org).

# Leaf Book Friday Lunch, April 2004

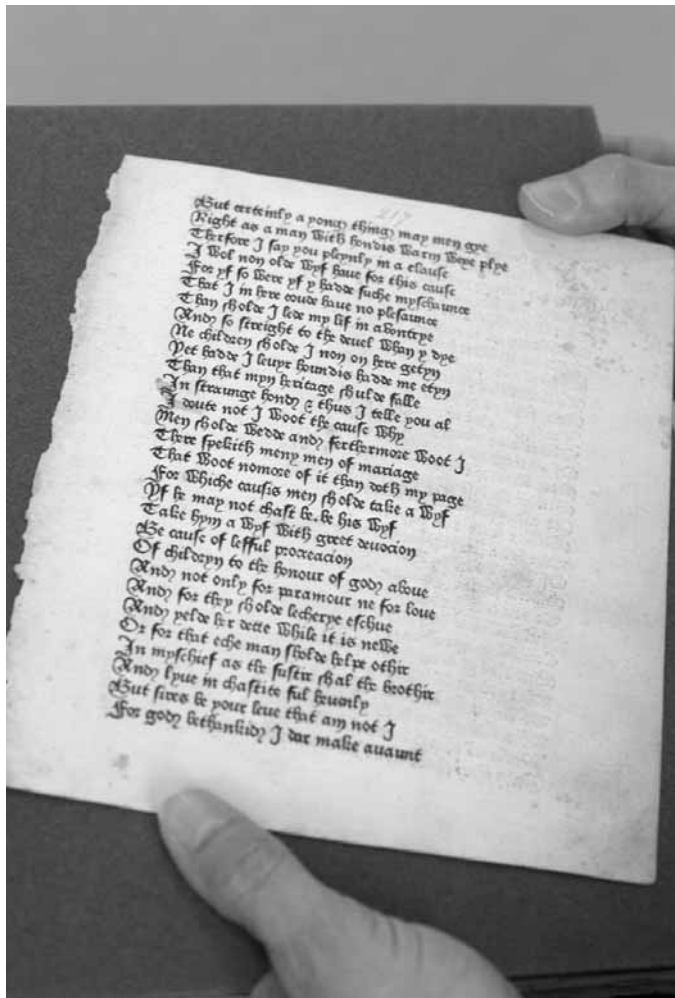
A preview of an exhibition

Martha Chiplis

On April 9, one year in advance of the Caxton Club's exhibition, "Disbound and Dispersed: The Leaf Book Considered" at the Newberry Library, Caxtonian Kay Michael Kramer presented 11 leaf books from his own collection at the Caxton Club's Friday Lunch meeting. Kramer and Caxtonian Michael Thompson, who also brought leaf books from his collection, will both be lending books to this very important and groundbreaking exhibition.

Joel Silver, Curator of Books at the Lilly

*The leaf from Michael Thompson's copy of the Caxton Club 1905 William Caxton.*



Library at Indiana University, Bloomington, who is curating the exhibition, also attended. Silver was in Chicago to look at leaf books at Northwestern University's Special Collections and to begin to develop a checklist of books to include in the show.

The presentation at the Friday Lunch was essentially a show-and-tell featuring leaf books and a preview of the upcoming exhibit. As is usual for the lunch meetings, the leaf books shown and discussed could

also be touched. Of course when the books are installed at the Newberry Library (and other venues where the show will travel) this will not be the case.

Kramer began his presentation with remarks on the rationale behind publishing and collecting leaf books. "What" he asked, "is a poor collector to do who wants to collect early printing?" To illustrate his point, Kramer reviewed some sale prices of Gutenberg Bibles. The New York Public Library owns the first Gutenberg Bible ever to be brought to the New World. They purchased it in 1847 for \$2,600. In 1978, three copies of the Gutenberg Bible were sold, one for \$1.8



*Kay Michael Kramer (left) and Michael Thompson (right) are lending books to the exhibit. Joel Silver (center) is curating.*

million, a second for \$2.2 million, and a third for \$2.4 million. Then in 1987, a single volume of the Gutenberg Bible (the Old Testament) sold for an impressive \$5.39 million. In contrast, in 2004 it is possible to purchase a leaf book that contains a single fragment, or leaf, of an important piece of printing for a mere \$100 to \$1,500.

"It should be said," Kramer continued, "that leaf books exist because fragmentation has occurred. These fragments, or leaves, are still desirable, but because they are fragments they are rendered so much more affordable to the 'poor collector.' Leaf books afford the opportunity to touch, to handle, to own a page, a leaf, touched by Gutenberg or Caxton, to have an authentic aesthetic experience."

What are the alternatives to buying your very own Gutenberg Bible or Caxton Chaucer? One is to go to a rare book library or special collections room, or the more modern choice, to view the book on a computer screen in the form of digital photographs such as the ones produced by Octavo. But for Kramer, who is a collector, and also a printer, it will always be far more desirable to acquire. The solution then, invented in the 19th century, is the leaf book.

Not discussed in depth but still at issue are the ethics of book breaking, or the



deliberate breaking up of a book in order to make a leaf book. This and other related and controversial issues will be addressed at a symposium moderated by Michael Thompson, on Friday, May 13, 2005, in conjunction with the exhibit at the Newberry Library.

Following his discussion of the rationale of the publishing and collecting of leaf books, Kramer showed some of the leaf books he has collected.

Worth noting is the fact that the edition size of the leaf book is necessarily restricted by the number of leaves available. Each copy in an edition contains a different original leaf or fragment of the same book; or sometimes the leaves are grouped together in some other way. For example, if the scholarly information contained is valuable enough to stand on its own, an edition of 350 might be printed, but only 200 might contain original leaves.

The first book shown at the April meeting was from the Grabhorn Press, published in 1958 (1) in an edition of 200, with an early 15th century French illumination from a Book of Hours. Also shown, from the Book Club of California and printed by the Grabhorn Press was a book (2) with a leaf from the Aldine *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* printed at Venice in 1499. The copy that was shown contains the title page leaf.

Also shown by Kramer, a book published by Zeitlin & Ver Brugge and Bernard M. Rosenthal Inc. in 1971 (3). The copy contains the colophon page from Peter Schoeffer, Mainz, 1472, and has the famous printer's mark of Fust and Schoeffer. It belonged to Jake Zeitlin and has his signature on the front paste down, and was printed by Saul and Lillian Marks at The Plantin Press.

Michael Thompson brought his copy of the Caxton Club's own leaf book, published in 1905 (4). The leaf contained is from Caxton's edition of *Canterbury Tales*, 1478. Thompson also showed a leaf book published by Philip C. Duschnes, New York 1949 (5), which contains leaf from the Koran, from 1122 AD.

After the presentation, the leaf books were available for examination and careful handling. Those who attended left with a

clearer understanding of what leaf books are, and especially what makes them so desirable. This was merely a taste of the show to come.

“Disbound and Dispersed: The Leaf Book Considered” will open at the Newberry Library April 20, 2005 and travel to three other venues.

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(1) Schulz, H. C. *French Illuminated Manuscripts*. Printed for David McGee by The Grabhorn Press. San Francisco, 1958.

Limited to 200 copies. With a manuscript leaf from a miniature Book of Hours and a reproduction of a miniature redrawn and colored by Mary Grabhorn. With small library bookplate.

(2) Aldus Pius Manutius. *With an essay by Theodore Low De Vinne together with a leaf from the Aldine Hypnerotomachia Poliphili printed at Venice 1499*. The Book Club of California. San Francisco, 1924.

Number 17 of 250 copies (only 192 copies contained a leaf). This copy contains the title page leaf, a study in brevity, backed up by a half page of text with a six line initial. From the estate of Robert Grabhorn with Robert Grabhorn's book plate in a separate envelope and a shelf label on the rear paste-down. Printed by The Grabhorn Press. One of the AIGA Fifty Books of the year.

(3) Schoeffer, Peter. *Two Essays on the "Decretum of Gratian" by Hellmut Lehmann-Haupt and Charles McCurry Together with an Original Leaf Printed on Vellum by Peter Schoeffer at Mainz in 1472*. Zeitlin & Ver Brugge, Los Angeles & Bernard M. Rosenthal, Inc., San Francisco, 1971.

Number 192 of 193 copies. This copy, with



Christopher de Hamel looking at leaf books at Northwestern University during a recent visit to Chicago. De Hamel, Donnelley Fellow Librarian at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, will contribute an essay on the Caxton Club's Chaucer leaf book to the exhibition catalog. Photo by Kim Coventry.

the final leaf containing the colophon and the famous printer's mark of Fust and Schoeffer, belonged to Jake Zeitlin and with his signature on the front paste down. Printed by Saul and Lillian Marks at The Plantin Press.

(4) Duff, E. Gordon. 1905. *William Caxton, by E. Gordon Duff. With an Original Leaf from the first edition of the Canterbury Tales printed by Caxton in 1478*. Chicago: Printed for the Caxton Club by R. R. Donnelley & Sons Company at the Lakeside Press.

(5) Philip C. Duschnes. 1949. *Original Leaves from Famous Books, Nine Centuries, 1122-1923 A.D. Annotated by Otto F. Ege*. New York: Philip C. Duschnes.

Note: Leaf book descriptions (1 -5) from Kay Michael Kramer and John Chalmers. Luncheon photographs by John Dunlevy.

# The Publishers' Trade List Annual and Book Collecting

When a book has been produced in hundreds of editions, keeping track of them requires help

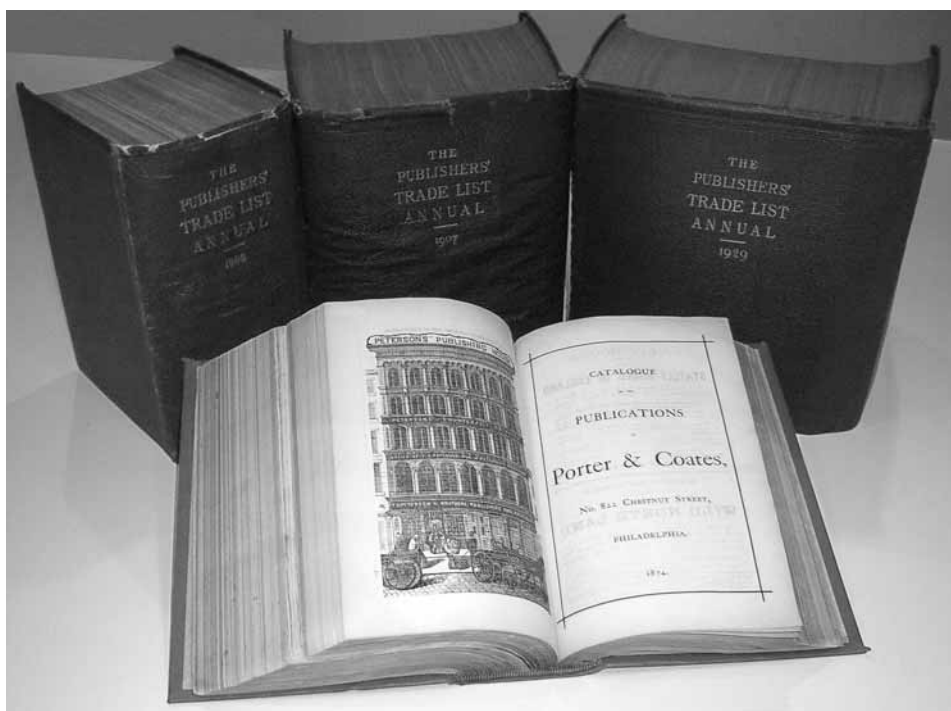
Sidney F. Huttner

Few people are called to *read* directories. But it appears I am one of them.

Owen Meredith's *Lucile* wormed its way into my attention in 1985. Even though I have spent 19 years of fairly dedicated effort, I have been able to collect copies of only about 700 of the more than 2000 American editions I am confident were published between 1860 and 1938. My confidence is based on a monument of American bibliography of which most collectors are blissfully—I choose that word carefully!—unaware. Monument it may be; easy to find and use, it ain't.

The publishing trade magazine *Publishers' Weekly* (*PW*) began publication in New York City in 1872. As it still does today, *PW* carried news of interest to the trade, advertising, and descriptions of new publications. Its editor, Frederick Leypoldt, intended to continue the work of men whose bibliographies are well remembered by Americana collectors—works such as Orville A. Roorbach's *Bibliotheca Americana*, which catalogs American imprints from 1820 to 1861, and James Kelly's three volumes of *The American Catalogue of Books*, covering ten years starting in 1861. In addition to getting out *Publishers' Weekly* 52 weeks a year, Leypoldt continued Kelly's *American Catalogue* with eleven volumes for the period 1876 to 1910.

Leypoldt started another publication, *Publishers' Trade List Annual* (*PTLA*), in 1873 as the basis on which a full catalog of United States imprints might eventually be founded. The title page of the second (1874) volume reads in full: "The Publishers' Trade List Annual, Embracing the Full Trade Lists of American Publishers, together with an Alphabetical Reference List of Books recorded in the Publisher's Weekly from January 16, 1873, to June 27, 1874, and the American Educational Catalogue for 1874. With Alphabetical Indexes of Firms and Trade



Specialities. New York: Office of the Publishers' Weekly, 37 Park Row. October, 1874."

Leypoldt's idea was straightforward: ask every American publisher to submit by a specified date a specified number of copies of a catalog of the firm's publications. Collate the resulting catalogs, provide some indices and other preliminary matter, and bind the result into a volume that could be distributed back to booksellers, libraries, and other potential book buyers and distributors. The call for submissions must have included general specifications on size: the volumes are relatively uniform, page size about 8 by 11 inches, but grow thicker with each passing year as both individual catalogs and the number of publishers submitting them grow larger. By 1900, the volumes are a foot thick and unwieldy in the extreme.

Content varies. Some catalogs were little more than lists with price and order information. Others offer substantial descriptions of individual books and series. Relatively few are illustrated in the 1870s; by the late 1880s, however, more and more

are illustrated with line cuts and half-tones, often of bindings, later dust jackets, and also of authors, manufacturing facilities, and publisher's offices. Paper quality varies but is, in general, not very good.

A second part of Leypoldt's idea was to index each year's *PTLA* to provide access to individual authors and titles. Regrettably, he never got to this. His successors, the H. W. Wilson Company, tried with the *Cummulative Book Index* in 1898 and produced volumes of *The United States Catalog* in 1899, 1902, 1912, and 1928, all sadly incomplete and ad hoc. Leypoldt's ambition was not realized until 1948, when *PTLA* became the source document for *Books in Print* (now an online database, *Bowker's Global Books in Print*). It is safe to say that the content of volumes published prior to 1948 is not easily or reliably accessed.

Relatively few publisher's catalogs survive, however, and those which do are widely scattered; *PTLA* thus remains an invaluable resource for research of late 19th century imprints. Maddeningly, an informal survey in 1995-1997 suggests that runs of the pre-1920 volumes, which libraries far

and wide must once have held, are now far from common. Full or nearly full runs of *PTLA* have so far been identified at only a dozen American libraries. Chicago is fortunate indeed to have at least two copies—one at the Newberry and one at the Center for Research Libraries (to which Iowa sent its run in the 1980s). During the 1970s, the Meckler Corporation published a somewhat more accessible microfiche edition of *PTLA* 1903-1981, but for the early years it is find-me-if-you-can.

After you've accepted the fact there is only look-for-the-page access to individual titles, another maddening thing about *PTLA* is that it is possible to know which publishers are represented in which years only by seeking out a run and—looking. Thereby finding, of course, all too often, that Leyboldt didn't find the firm or that the publisher didn't bother to contribute in the year you need him to have done so.

Each volume of *PTLA* is prefaced by a single alphabetical list of publishers contributing catalogs and of publishers and others who chose to offer display advertisements in lieu of catalogs. It appears that most catalogs arrived in a timely way and were arranged in alphabetical order by name of publisher; a few, inevitably, arrived late and were placed in a supplement bound after the primary sequence. Advertisements might appear on the cover of the binding, on endsheets or preliminary pages, or on pages inserted after the supplement. The principal purpose of the index was to point to these various locations.

From the late 1970s through the 1980s I drudged my way through some 750,000 city directory entries to produce, with editorial help by my wife, Elizabeth Stege Huttner, *A Register of Artists, Engravers, Booksellers, Bookbinders, Printers & Publishers in New York City, 1821-1842*

(New York: Bibliographical Society of America, 1993). [It continues a work of similar title by George L. McKay (New York Public Library, 1942) for the period 1633-1820.]

To scout out copies of *Lucile*, I turned to the *PTLA*, and found myself again reading directories for fun and profit. What I eventually was able to document was something over 2000 editions of a book nobody reads any more. For that matter, it's not a book they *should* be reading! But it is a fascinating episode of American publishing history.

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*Huttner, Head of Special Collections, The University of Iowa Libraries, has compiled an index to the lists of contributors from each volume of the PTLA 1873-1947, work that is partially available on the web at <http://staffweb.lib.uiowa.edu/shuttner/ptla/index.htm>.*

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## David W. Dangler, Caxtonian Since 1964

*Dan Crawford*

The last time I heard from David Dangler, he had left a voicemail message saying he was interested in joining the Caxton Club, an organization to which he had belonged for 34 years at that point. It might have been a joke—it was somewhat in his style—but if it was no more than a hitch in a failing memory, it nonetheless showed where his priorities were: with books.

“He liked to reminisce about uncrating books at the Newberry with Jim Wells and Charlie Haffner and, oh, Andy McGhee, and the others,” said Toni Harkness, who knew him there. “He just liked being with the books; it did something for his soul.”

David W. Dangler, who died July 14, at 89, was the son of David Dangler, an investment banker (as well as a Caxton Club member from 1920 to 1929). His mother, nee Corwith, had been the subject of a poem by Eugene Field, the manuscript of which was a centerpiece of David's mighty Eugene Field collection.



*David Dangler; photo from the archives of the Chicago Community Trust*

An administrative officer in the Personal Trust Division of Northern Trust for nearly 41 years, he found himself taking both a professional and personal interest in philanthropy. Among the offices he held were Trustee of Rush Presbyterian Hospital, Treasurer of the Erie

Neighborhood House, President of the United Christian Community Service (which included Erie Neighborhood House), and Chairman of Associates' Council at Newberry, the Newberry Library Associates being a group he helped form in its early years.

After retirement, he became even more a part of the Newberry, volunteering in Conservation, and taking part in numerous social events at the Library. His presence at any such event was an asset. One colleague at Northern Trust remarked on his ability to contribute in any setting: social, business, or intellectual. He was known for his wry sense of humor and, Toni Harkness recalled, a sometimes disconcerting way of suddenly dropping a bon mot in French into the conversation.

Remembered by virtually everyone as a gentle man, and a gentleman, always with an interest in people, books, and cars (a green Bentley eventually appears in most recollections of him), David was an ornament to the institutions lucky enough to enjoy his company.

# Bookmarks...

Luncheon Program  
September 10, 2004

Tom Joyce  
"Anecdotes of Chicago Booksellers"

The fall season begins with Caxtonian Joyce talking about a favorite subject. His full title is "A Personal Selection of Anecdotes of Chicago Booksellers (Chiefly Antiquarian and Deceased)."

In the 1860s Chicago was home to the biggest dealer in new books west of New York City. By the 1890s there were still not enough old books available locally to satisfy the demands of the titans of commerce and industry who made Chicago the Windy City. In the twentieth century, Chicago was home to as colorful a group of book peddlers as one could imagine, from the Dickensian to the fastidious, from the mildewy to the creepily occult.

Joyce has collected notes and anecdotes from reading and from personal contacts with these world-renowned and unknown bibliopoles and even some bibliophiles. He will whet your appetite for more arcana about the sublime and occasionally seamy sides of rare books and rare booksellers. Along the way expect to become acquainted with William Targ, Jerrold Nedwick, Sharon and Van Allen Bradley, J. F. Von Berg, Wright Howes, and the girls of Fanny Butcher.

Tom Joyce, a well known Chicago antiquarian bookseller and founding partner of the Chicago Rare Book Center, wears many hats: appraiser, speaker (including appearances as "Dr. Rare") and most recently, TV and radio personality.

## Beyond September...

**OCTOBER LUNCHEON:**  
Friday, October 8th, Helen Sclair will tell us about "What Happened at 2 PM, June 30, 1995 in the Ryerson/Burnham Library of the Art Institute of Chicago."

**OCTOBER DINNER:**  
Wednesday, October 20, Virginia Bartow, Curator of the George Arents Collection at the New York Public Library, will talk on "Ninety for the Nineties: A Decade of Printing," an exhibition of letterpress books that she curated at the Library.

All luncheon and dinner meetings, unless otherwise noted, are held in the Mid-Day Club, 56th floor of BankOne, Madison & Clark, Chicago. Luncheon: buffet opens at 11:30; program 12:30-1:30. Dinner meetings: spirits at 5 pm, dinner at 6 pm, lecture at 7:30 pm. For reservations

Dinner Program  
September 15, 2004

David Malone  
"Rare Book and Special Collections  
at Wheaton College"

David Malone is Head, Archives and Special Collections, at the Buswell Memorial Library of Wheaton College and is on the faculty of the College. He will speak about the William S. Akin Rare Book Collection, the foundation of the Special Collections at Wheaton College, and of the associated Wade Center. These are major cultural resources in the Chicago area that are not sufficiently well known.

Akin was an avid book collector and Caxtonian who lived in Evanston and who donated his entire collection, containing thousands of volumes, to the College. Some of the gems of the collection are one hundred illustrated editions of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* and a first edition of Johnson's *Dictionary*.

The Marion E. Wade Center houses a major research collection of the books and papers of seven British authors: Owen Barfield, G.K. Chesterton, C.S. Lewis, George MacDonald, Dorothy L. Sayers, J.R.R. Tolkien, and Charles Williams. The Center also houses a museum where memorabilia of the authors can be viewed.

Malone holds degrees from Moody Bible Institute, Wheaton College Graduate School, Northern Illinois University, and the University of Illinois. His many publications and presentations have included a wide variety of topics in history and library science.

*For an additional September event to which Caxtonians are invited, see page 7.*

**NOVEMBER LUNCHEON:**  
Friday, November 12, Ed Quattrocchi speaks on "The Most Important Books Published between 1455 and 1623."

**NOVEMBER DINNER:**  
Wednesday, November 17, the program will feature David Buisseret, the editor of the forthcoming *Oxford Companion to Exploration*.

call 312-255-3710 or email [caxtonclub@newberry.org](mailto:caxtonclub@newberry.org). Members and guests: Lunch \$25, Dinner \$45. Discount parking available for evening meetings, with a stamped ticket, at Standard Self-Park, 172 W. Madison.