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Current Trends in Antiquarian Books

HELLMUT LEHMANN-HAUPT, Issue Editor

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Library Trends

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Current Trends in Antiquarian Books

HELLMUT LEHMANN-HAUPT, Issue Editor

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Introduction

HELLMUT LEHMANN-HAUPT

What is happening in the rare book trade today? It would be difficult to find a more challenging question about the world of books in America at this particular time. Strange, unheard of things have happened and are still happening in the rare book world. Whether we like it or not, it is a fact that for the first time in the history of American book collecting rare books have begun to flow back to an appreciable degree from the Western world to countries along and behind the Eastern shores of the Atlantic Ocean. For the first time since American collectors began to dominate the field about a hundred years ago, have European private collectors returned to the position of serious competitors. Even state and university libraries in Europe have entered the arena. True enough, these are not conditions which have developed suddenly and without any previous warning, but they have taken on considerably enlarged proportions and an accelerated pace today.

New York’s position as a leading center for rare book auctions, conspicuous before World War II, has been appreciatively overshadowed by London as pointed out in John Carter’s article in this issue.

Relatively little has been written about these rather startling developments. The astonishing thing is that they are taking place at a time when rare book interest in this country can be seen in a more dynamic state, and growing in volume and intensity at a much faster rate than ever before. There is hardly an article in this issue which does not mention this pattern of growth in one way or another.

Last but not least among the trends that strike even the casual observer of the rare book scene with singular force is the spectacular rise in price.

There is no single, simple explanation for all these things, and it may be a little early in the game for a complete and satisfying answer. However, it is possible to point out at least some of the reasons for

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these changes. First of all, there is the obvious fact that prices for nearly everything are mounting steadily in our present inflationary economy. In the rare book field, the contrast between yesterday's and today's prices is accentuated by the fact that unjustifiably low prices prevailed between the two world wars, especially during the depression of the 'thirties. The breaking up of some of the great traditional monarchies and other political changes on the map of Europe created a pattern of forced sales—"fire sales" one is almost tempted to call them. Many great collections, preserved for centuries in castles and monasteries, had to be disposed of under duress. The pressures were created by the dwindling of capital resources and disastrously low prices for such staple commodities as wood, wine, and various agricultural products, on which these institutions and families had depended for survival.

The European collectors today are largely the result of the phenomenal postwar prosperity of Western Europe. They do not come from among the nouveaux riches, rather they are men of education and taste, ready to make up for the losses and forced resignation of the past and eager to show their prowess on the international scene. Also, they are aware of the fact that rare books, like paintings and other art objects, are a good investment. They have learned the secret that in spite of the scarcity of books it is still possible to build a great library—provided that money is no consideration.

Our American collectors, by comparison, are not infrequently in the difficult position of having to live with all too vivid memories of the "golden age" of collecting when, a generation or so ago, war and depression made it possible to buy some very great treasures at very low prices indeed. The new European collector is not inhibited by such comparisons.

Some aspects of this situation will be further dealt with by the authors of the following articles. There seems no harm in the fact that certain observations have been made by more than one contributor. It simply proves their importance. A good example is the repeated statement that the greatest difficulty for the rare book dealer today is not so much the selling of his wares, but the replenishment of his stock.

No matter how carefully one may survey a certain territory and divide it up among a group of contributors, there will always remain a certain amount of no-man's land. It is hoped that the following introductory notes, while serving as a general framework for the
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separate articles, also will reduce the “terra incognita” by discussing matters that have only lightly been touched upon, or not discussed at all, in the articles.

These notes are offered by someone who has had the good fortune of having lived and worked on both sides of the fence, so to speak. They are mostly observations from the field, the fruits of a certain amount of practical experience gained as rare book librarian and library school teacher and, subsequently, as consultant to a leading rare book dealer.

One important question of definition has to be settled first. When we speak of a rare book nowadays we do not really mean a book whose main attraction lies in its scarcity. The term “rare book” is used as a convenient label which identifies a great many different things. In this issue of Library Trends we are concerned mainly with what rare books mean to libraries. There is really no reason why a public or university library should try to build or acquire a collection of volumes distinguished mainly or entirely by the scarcity of the volumes it contains.¹ ²

A realistic, up-to-date interpretation of the term “rare book” should rest on the definition of another, more general and more important concept—that of education. The often raised question of the real value of a rare book collection in a library depends wholly on what we believe to be the basic function of education on all levels.

A case can be made and always will be made for a type of education which, generally speaking, aims at preparing the individual for economic survival, or to improve his economic status. If we think of education as the means to prepare a man or woman for a given vocation or profession, then there is hardly room for rare books in his training. In the library serving such an educational program rare books are indeed a luxury. They may add a little prestige and perhaps attract donors of some further prestige books, but the whole affair remains on the periphery of the true function of such an institution. On the other hand, there is a very different concept of education, and one in which rare books have indeed an important function.

This kind of education is perhaps best described as one which aims at the development of the entire personality, challenging the mind, awakening or stimulating a multitude of curiosities and capacities, sharpening perception and observation. It is the training of a man for thought and action against the background of the society he lives in. The perspective of history is an essential ingredient of such an
education. How can we find out where we are going without knowing where we have been? Contact with the past is established not only by the observation of ideas and beliefs but also of trends and events. Equally important is contact with the social and cultural climate of former generations.

The aesthetic quality of the vast majority of surviving manuscripts and early printed books is a very important point. It should be remembered that the sanctimonious separation of that which is useful from that which is beautiful is a very recent thing in western civilization. It goes back no further than two hundred years to the eighteenth century and the beginnings of the industrial revolution. During the preceding ten or twelve centuries such a separation was unheard of. Content and form, image and message, were an inseparable entity, a homogeneous whole. That is why medieval and renaissance manuscripts and early printed books have this very special quality of authenticity. As the combined products of the intellectual leaders and of devoted artist-craftsmen of the generations that lived before us—as tangible objects which have survived to the present day—they are precious first-hand witnesses of some of the most noble efforts of our ancestors, living tissue of the fabric of history.

For this reason, the photostat and the microfilm, or any of the other methods of reproduction (see L. S. Thompson's article, p. 437), can never hope to compete with the originals in this vital function—anymore than even the best reproduction of a painting by Titian, Rembrandt, or Manet can be anything more than a mediocre substitute.

Of course, rare books and manuscripts share this quality of authenticity with other artifacts surviving from the past, such as paintings, sculpture, architectural monuments, or examples of the arts and crafts. Yet, in the educational process the book has the advantage of greater mobility, which makes possible a multitude of uses, in the reading room, the classroom, and the exhibition case. The book also has the advantage of easier storage and conservation—especially much easier safe-keeping in times of disaster.

The rare book dealer who devotes himself to the search for such treasures and to finding suitable homes for them is sometimes asked how he goes about this business of selling. This is very much a matter of personal experience.

The secret about the art of rare book selling, in this writer's opinion, is that there should be no salesmanship, for the simple reason that
there is really no need for it. A good book sells itself. The real art for
the dealer today is not selling, but buying, a much more difficult,
intricate, and delicate process. Selling is really just about the same
thing as matchmaking—finding the man who will fall in love with
your book and take it away from you. The true rare book dealer
knows, understands, and himself loves his books. He will not need to
make special efforts to “project” his belief in the books which he offers
to his friends and customers.

This image of rare book selling as matchmaking is perhaps an
oversimplification of a rather complex procedure, but it has a good
deal of truth in it. For this reason the library is lucky which has a
person on the staff who is capable of thus falling in love. In other,
and more sober words, it is essential for the healthy growth of a rare
book collection that it be tended by someone with a genuine instinct
for the beauty and dignity, the character and valor of rare books.
Without a real bookman on the library staff the best laid plans may
never really come to life.

It is no secret that the man who does the buying of rare books in
a library is not necessarily its director. One could of course name a
handful or so of directors of libraries who have done and are doing
an outstanding job in the building of their rare book collections. But li-
brary administration has become an ever more absorbing task and the
main emphasis in library school training has been on the raising of a
generation of future administrators as Rollo Silver discusses later in
this issue. In this connection a significant step is the establishment by
the Indiana University Libraries at Bloomington, Indiana, of the “Lilly
Library Fellowships,” a training program for rare book librarianship,
to begin July 1, 1961.

Also, there is a certain Puritan tradition still alive in our libraries
which denies the librarian or curator the right to follow his own taste
and use his own, personal judgment. There is no written law or regula-
tion to such effect, but rather a quirk of conscience. Such a man may
pass up an otherwise worth-while purchase for the simple reason that
it appeals strongly to him. He will seek reinforcement and justification
from someone else and, when this is not readily forthcoming, will
prefer to say no rather than yes. Actually, he may be doing the
opposite of what he desires to do, namely, to render his institution the
fullest service he is capable of rendering. Where a man has spent
most of the years of his life in constant and close contact with books,
and a great many of the years serving one institution, his taste in books
is not a casual, personal whim, but a mature and seasoned capacity. Such a person’s judgment, applied to the purchasing of rare books, is one of the most valuable assets which he has to offer to his institution.

There is, of course, the obvious consideration that in a college or university library, the relationship of the library staff with the faculty is a factor of the greatest imaginable importance. The crucial point is whether or not the head of the library has the ultimate authority in deciding what books to purchase, when, and at what prices.

It would be difficult to find a librarian who does not consult his faculty, keep in contact with those of the teaching staff who have developed tastes in book collecting and strong interests in the growth of the resources available for consultation and research. He would be extremely foolish not to avail himself of the experience and wisdom of the scholars in his community and to cultivate their good will. But there lies a certain danger in over-dependence on the faculty. With a few very rare exceptions, a scholar is bound to remain interested mainly in his own field of research and of instruction. He is fully justified in favoring purchasing policies which will benefit primarily his Ph.D. students and his own research. However, such a program is by no means identical with the best possible growth of the library as a whole. Even if one were to imagine an ideal university, staffed in each discipline of learning, research, and instruction with the best talent available, and if the librarian of such an institution were to carry out to the fullest the combined wishes of each faculty or department, he would still by no means be making the best use of the funds available to him. He would still not be developing the library as an organic and integrated whole; he would still not be filling gaps which only he and his staff are aware of and which may hamper not present, but future generations of scholars; last, not least, he would not be free to avail himself of those rare, and frequently unique opportunities of acquiring materials still available today, but certainly unobtainable in the future. He will not be allowed the full exercise of his judgment, wisdom, and vision as a bookman, he will not be able to render one of the most important services to his institution of which he is capable—namely to build and strengthen those resources which will render his university a better, more desirable place for the scholars and students of the future.

It is a historic fact that the great rare book libraries, and for that matter most of the important research libraries in this country, are the fruit of the personal initiative of inspired collectors and the en-
thusiastic reception and cultivation of their treasures by the bookmen on the staffs of these libraries. The combination of separate collections into an ultimately homogeneous entity is the great challenge to the skill and the vision of the librarian.

On the question of funds the wise old observation that “money follows ideas” seems to be the answer. In the long run, better results may be expected in an institution with comparatively meager funds but where there is imagination, enthusiasm, and determination, than in a place where there is money available but no personal initiative. Even a developed acquisitions policy, carefully drawn up to fit what appear to be the most urgent current needs, unless interpreted liberally and with some flexibility, is less likely to bring lasting results than a less well defined, but forward looking and enterprising attitude which is sensitive both to special opportunities in the rare book market and to the many possibilities of fund raising as Frances Brewer points out in her article.

No single element in the financial attitude of a library is so likely to attract attention and bring in outside help—often from the least expected quarters—than the willingness to spend at least a portion of one’s own, appropriated funds for rare books. One often hears the argument: “We are not ready for such a program. There are too many pressing current needs, inherited gaps in our holdings, faculty demands, support of new research projects. Rare books are a luxury we cannot afford.” Where this attitude prevails, chances are slim for the development of a rare book collection. The institution which will invest all its funds year in and year out primarily for current use, will inevitably acquire a fairly high quota of textbooks, manuals, and similar books that will become obsolete in the due course of time, resulting in a correspondingly low quota of materials of lasting and increasing value. By contrast, there is the library which will set aside each year a portion of the available funds for rare books. The annual appropriation may be a modest one, and the percentage put aside for special purchases a very low one. Take for example an annual budget of $50,000 and only 5 per cent of this reserved. This would still mean that within say fifteen years nearly $40,000, or almost the equivalent of an annual appropriation will have been spent on books, manuscripts, and other special materials which will be permanently and increasingly valuable. This is an investment in the living tokens of the past, preserving precious monuments of the growth of western civilization.
The proposition for an institution is not so very different than for the individual in regard to his saving from current income. Will he, or will he not be able and willing to lay aside each year assets which will bear fruit in the future?

Where such a plan is initiated, it would be a good idea to have it understood from the outset that the rare book fund should normally be used for items priced above a certain mark—say one hundred dollars. Why? Many librarians are afraid of the raised eyebrows of faculty members, trustees, friends, accountants, and comptrollers, when a substantial amount is to be spent for one single purchase. Such criticism in many cases can be forestalled by a frank statement of the purpose of a rare book collection and the realities of the market. In other cases, a process of gradual education may be wiser.

In some libraries book money has been budgeted at the beginning of the fiscal year at the disposal of certain departments or research programs. There may be situations where this is advisable or inevitable. But the practice has also been followed without special necessity. Experience shows that, as a rule, the unrestricted, undivided appropriation is the most useful one. It may turn out that by all means the most productive thing is to spend all of one (or even two) year’s money on a single, exceptionally attractive, and worth-while item.

Money given by an angel or a group of friends is frequently given with certain stipulations. Unless impossible conditions are made (and this has happened to museums as well as to libraries by bargain hunters for a cheap mausoleum) it would be foolish to turn down such gifts. The personal interest of a patron in a given subject or type of book can have most desirable results and there are librarians with a lucky hand who have “developed” several regular donors, each interested in a different collection in his library. However, donations from friends, the same as appropriations, are often most effective in rare book purchasing when available without restrictions and conditions. Many still uncommitted friends of libraries will understand this if it is properly explained.

Like any other commodity, rare books are subject to the law of demand and supply. What about the demand for rare books? Is it shrinking, stable, or growing? There can be no doubt that it is growing, growing at a rate that very likely will amaze the future chronicler of cultural life in America.

There is some pretty hard evidence in support of this, very clear in regard to institutional libraries, less so for private collectors. One fre-
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quently hears the opinion—not backed up by statistics—that there are fewer collectors active in our own time than “in the past.” This may very well be a fallacy, comparable to the familiar optical illusion when in a forest the trees around one seem fewer and further apart than those further away. I suspect that the future observer will find at least as many, if not many more collectors active in our own as compared with any past generation.

When thirty years ago I accepted the post of rare book curator at the Columbia University Library, I looked around for colleagues with the same or similar positions. I found very few. This refers of course to curators of departments set up within the framework of an institutional library, not to such autonomous (or semi-autonomous) libraries as Huntington, John Carter Brown, William L. Clements, Newberry, etc. That this was not the mere ignorance of a newcomer is borne out by an observation made some years ago by F. B. Adams, Jr., the director of the Pierpont Morgan Library: “Twenty-five years ago the rare book rooms in American college and university libraries could be counted on one’s fingers. Now the institution that doesn’t have one tends to feel it is out of step. Rare book rooms are not just at Harvard and Yale, they are literally everywhere.”

A close parallel is the truly amazing increase in the number of “Friends of the Library” groups, described here by Mrs. Brewer.

These institutions, their directors, their rare book and acquisitions librarians, as well as their individual patrons and groups of friends by and large are competing for essentially the same kinds of rare books on the market today.

Now, how about the supply? “Are rare books getting scarce?” One does not need statistics to see that by and large and in the long run they undoubtedly are. The reservoir of rare books available from all sources for purchase by collectors and libraries is shrinking. Partial or total destruction caused by wear and tear, loss through fire, water, warfare, and other natural and man-made disasters take their constant and steady toll. Possibly more serious even is the ever growing number of books that disappear permanently from the market because they are finding their final homes in institutional libraries. They go there both directly and via the home of the private collector. Due largely to the tax situation the number of private collections put back on the market is becoming smaller and smaller; purchase of books from institutional libraries is virtually nonexistent, except in the very few instances where duplicates are disposed of.
But, one may ask, is it true that this rare book reservoir is only shrinking? Is it not also growing? Are there not constant additions of new books, which are assuming rare book status? Yes, there is a continuing progress of what we might call canonization, whereby books published (and manuscripts written) comparatively recently are being recognized as rare books. Advances in science furnish such candidates, and as a classic example in this field one may cite the writings of Sigmund Freud and Albert Einstein. In his article, M. J. Walsh describes the situation in the field of Basic Americana, and W. R. Howell for Western Americana. However, it is very doubtful that this process of canonization could ever fully compensate for the rapid shrinkage of the classic repertory of rare books available for purchase. There is no question, rare books are getting scarce. The conclusion is inevitable that there is a steadily growing demand for a steadily dwindling commodity.

This is another reason, in addition to those cited earlier in this article, for the conspicuous and unprecedented rise in the price of rare books. Compared with the amounts paid even as recently as five or ten years ago, the current prices do seem rather high. And compared with what one had to pay, say, a hundred years ago for the very same titles, the increase looks almost unbelievable. It is entirely plausible that the future may bring a downward trend, at least temporarily and for certain kinds of books and certain individual titles. After all, there are fashions in collecting which influence all buyers, private and institutional, and which are quickly understood by the trade. For instance, within the last half generation or so, incunabula have gone into something of a decline and have soared again to new heights—not only of prices but also of understanding and appreciation. This changing attitude towards fifteenth century books is well described by Thomas Marston in his article in this issue.

All in all, it is not a very daring prophecy to say that any possible lowering of prices would be of only very brief duration. One need only look back into the last century to gain perspective on what may be ahead. R. A. L. Tree has cited some excellent examples of rising prices, e.g., *The Bay Psalm Book* from $400 in 1855 to $151,000 in 1947; Milton’s *Poems*, 1645, from $370 in 1895 to $1875 in 1952. To add another example, with more recent quotations, there is Newton’s *Principia*, 1687, sold at the following prices: 1894, presentation copy, $7.50; 1925, in vellum, $22; 1937, contemp. calf, repaired, $390; 1948, contemp. calf, repaired, $570; 1950, original calf, $1,500; 1958, with
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contemp. ms. notations, $1,850; also 1958, the Devonshire copy, in contemp. red morocco, c. $5,300.

What will this book sell for in 2061? For a university library, or a public library with research interests, that is not looking too far ahead.

There is really no reason why this pattern of steadily growing demand for an ever dwindling supply of rare books should not continue, why the competition should not become keener and keener. Our textbook publishers are getting ready for the “population explosion” during the next few decades, an expectation clearly reflected in their financial policies. To be sure, nobody in his right senses expects a mass movement demanding rare books. There are no statistics available to show us what percentage of the total population needs contact with rare books at one point or another in their education. But however small that percentage may be, and assuming that it will remain reasonably stable, it is safe to say that several generations from now many more teachers and students than today will want to find rare books in the libraries of their institutions.

References

Collecting Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts Today

LAURENCE WITTEN

Despite a noticeable surge of interest in medieval and renaissance manuscripts in the past twenty years, perhaps particularly since World War II, most people who are interested in and acquainted with this corner of the book world agree that manuscripts, or at the very least some kinds of them, are today and always have been neglected in the marketplace. Disregarding entirely that type of book collector, well known to dealers, who is heard to say that he really ought to have "one or two representative manuscripts to round out his collection," it must be acknowledged that the total world supply of collectors of manuscripts at any given moment always seems very small, frighteningly so to the dealer. The scale on which Sir Thomas Phillipps collected manuscripts a century ago, despite his disagreeable habit of failing to pay his bills (whereby he brought to ruin more than one important bookseller), despite his extremely bad manners and contentiousness, and despite what many considered his ignorance—the mere scale is proof positive that he could and did have things his own way. Is the market for such things really so different today? Let us look briefly at this microcosm of medieval and renaissance manuscripts, and let us arbitrarily agree that we mean manuscripts produced before 1600 A.D., although much of what can be said about them holds true for somewhat later productions, too.

Book collectors (and dealers) appear to fall into well defined categories when it comes to manuscripts. There are those who detest manuscripts quite frankly and outspokenly, who do not understand them and do not pretend to, who would not give them house room. There are others who, once infected by the as yet undescribed microbe or unfiltered virus associated with manuscripts, can hardly think seriously of anything else. These two sub-species of bookman are

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seldom found together and seldom have anything at all to say to one another when, usually by mistake, they do happen to meet. There is doubtless a third type, perhaps happier than either of the other twain, who seems able to enjoy and comprehend both the printed word and the written word.

Manuscripts, even those which are mere copies of other manuscripts, have special qualities which set them apart from printed books. It probably takes a dexterous compositor not so very much longer to set up a substantial text in type than it does a dexterous scribe to copy the same text. The result of the compositor’s labors is a sort of negative from which a large number of positives may be produced. On the other hand, the scribe’s labors always produce just one positive. The scribe who is willing to labor for weeks or months to produce his single positive must have quite compelling reasons.

But the force behind the printing of a text is surely less strong; if one can sell only a certain specified number of printed positives, the enterprise is profitable, and the cost of producing the single printed positive is almost certain to be much lower than that of the single written positive. The manuscript, therefore, is likely to have been a valuable object to somebody in the time of writing. These qualities of uniqueness and of “original value” in manuscripts have always been prized to some extent, but they are rather definitely more highly valued today than they were a few decades or a century ago. There are, of course, a number of special types of materials like letters, diaries, registers, accounts, lectures, much poetry, etc, which are ordinarily found preserved only in manuscript form. If one is interested in material of this kind he must usually seek it out in manuscripts.

Richly prepared and richly decorated manuscripts have always had a special appeal, but there have been many disparities in this area. It is usually said that fine illustrated manuscripts fetch “high” prices, and yet if one really does measure their prices against those of paintings contemporary with them, manuscripts almost always appear to be available at relatively modest figures. Of course, it is perfectly true that almost any panel or canvas painting is likely to be much larger than almost any illuminated page from a book. Paintings may therefore hang on walls of institutions or parlors and command wider attention than miniature paintings from books. Still, it is quite certain that one may still have a manuscript book containing a number of very fine pictures of considerable antiquity for a fraction of the cost of a single panel painting which may not be of very great
merit or which may have suffered heavy damage. This is an important point which does not seem to be generally enough recognized. Most medieval wall and panel paintings have in fact suffered much in the course of time, and a very high proportion of them are very heavily repainted so that not very much of the original may still be seen; on the contrary, a very high proportion of illustrated manuscripts of the same age survive in virtually unblemished condition. The pictures in manuscripts (the technique of painting them is almost identical with that employed for the panels) preserve their original brilliance and integrity where, lamentably, larger works seldom do.

Just as manuscripts may preserve texts which we cannot find in printed form, so do they preserve in considerable number types of paintings which either do not exist at all or barely exist in separate wall paintings. Again to emphasize this fact, it may be interesting to point to some figures which are in any case widely known. In December 1959 the thirteenth century English Apocalypse from the Dyson Perrins Collection was sold for about $182,000; it contains eighty-two miniatures, two each on forty-one leaves. Although such computations are not entirely fair, it is a fact that each leaf cost the purchaser about $4,500 and each picture half that sum. Now, one really cannot have an English panel painting of the thirteenth century, nor a drawing, no matter what one is willing to pay, for such artifacts do not exist as merchandise. Were one such panel to appear miraculously for sale, it seems extremely likely that it would fetch a higher price than the Dyson Perrins Apocalypse with its eighty-two pictures. And so, although the price of the Apocalypse amounted to a great sum of money, it is perhaps not truly dear at the price.

Examples like this one could quite readily be multiplied, and there are further disparities of different kinds in the relationship of cost to value for illuminated manuscripts. It is still possible, perhaps even quite easy and not very expensive, to acquire manuscripts which admirably illustrate styles in art as well as paleography from the twelfth century forward. Really outstanding examples with very many or very large pictures are, of course, likely to be extremely costly, but just below the rank of these very costly objects, there exist considerable numbers of fine examples at modest prices. Several recent catalogs of manuscripts offered for sale clearly demonstrate this fact.

In Cambridge, Philip Hofer has formed an important and very interesting collection of manuscripts, different in scope from that at the University of Pennsylvania or of T. E. Marston in New Haven,
both of which will be discussed on the following pages. Hofer’s manuscripts reflect his interest in calligraphy and illumination through a long stretch of time, but characteristically also they include some highly interesting texts and illustrate this collector’s admirable interest in format of the book and bindings (the latter generally neglected in this country). In 1955 Harvard held an exhibition (in the Fogg Art Museum and the Houghton Library) primarily of Hofer’s gleanings; both the exhibition and the catalog, *Illuminated & Calligraphic Manuscripts*, have done much to concentrate interest on medieval and renaissance manuscripts. They also bear out the contention that this microcosm of manuscripts is a rich one, teeming with variety. On another continent, Martin Bodmer has assembled in Geneva a private library of extraordinary richness which includes many manuscripts, some of such great antiquity and importance that one scarcely believes such things could have been available, especially in the market of quite recent years.

So far, little has been said about the texts of manuscripts. In the heyday of Sir Thomas Phillipps’ collecting activities a century ago there was not very strong competition for interesting manuscript texts, unless of extremely early date or richly illustrated, with the possible exception of texts in the English language or of great importance to the study of English history. Gradually during the last century very much more importance has been attached to the texts of manuscripts, and there has been a marked spurt of interest in this connection in very recent years. Much of this increase in interest is clearly due to the definition of the role of the institution in collecting manuscripts, as well as to a growing awareness among private collectors. Many American institutions, for example, have rich libraries of printed books but very few illuminated manuscripts; their curators often think of illuminated manuscripts as “art objects” or paintings thinly disguised as books and are rather reluctant to enter late into an expensive market which will not yield substantial rewards in terms of publishable materials. These institutions like to have manuscript picture-books, as almost anyone would, but they do not ordinarily expend budgeted funds for their acquisition; in other words, they hope that somebody will give them a fair sample. On the other hand, not a great many art galleries will purchase illuminated manuscripts, because their curators tend to think of these as “books.” Sometimes, therefore, the illuminated manuscript falls between two stools in the world of the educational institution.
Text manuscripts are, however, a different story entirely. Many American institutions have been quite avidly acquiring manuscripts which are interesting primarily for their contents, rather than for their beauty. Such purchases are easy enough to justify because they provide excellent fodder for the hordes of graduate students who must write each year numberless papers and dissertations; also, publication of these materials draws attention in scholarly circles at least to the holdings of the institution. Dramatic examples (although not medieval ones) are the current publications of Boswell, Walpole, and Franklin materials.

There is growing interest in medieval and renaissance text manuscripts, and several strong collections have been built up in the United States in quite recent times. In New Haven Marston has assembled a remarkable collection of humanistic manuscripts, (in addition to his collection of incunabula, which he discusses in the following chapter) comprising medieval and renaissance copies of classical texts (mostly Latin with some Greek). He now has copies of nearly every important surviving classical Latin text, all of them bought within the past twenty years. In addition he has a large number of very interesting medieval texts, most of them in copies contemporary with the time of the original composition of these texts. Marston has paid attention to the history of his texts, has sought to have copies which represent the best text traditions, and in some cases has more than one version of a text. Although some of his manuscripts have been costly ones, numbers of them have been bought at very modest prices, and he now has a better humanistic library than virtually any humanist possessed during the renaissance. Having nearly exhausted the possibilities in this area, Marston more recently turned to medieval texts, with the result that he now has a better medieval library of manuscripts than perhaps the majority of medieval monastic libraries could boast. Almost incidentally, but with considerable acuity, he has in these processes acquired some remarkable manuscripts which have gone unrecognized. There is for example a lovely little book with Latin translations from Greek authors (mostly unpublished) which turned out to be from the library of Bernardo and Pietro Bembo and emanated no doubt from the scriptorium of Bartolomeo San Vito. Another manuscript is probably at least partly in the hand of the famous humanist Guarino da Varona, and it fits the description of a manuscript which figures in a typically rancorous exchange of letters between Guarino and Poggio. Other by-products
of this interest in texts are very many excellent examples of illumination from the twelfth to the fifteenth century and a splendid run of paleographic material of the same period.

On the other hand, the University of Pennsylvania has concentrated on text manuscripts of even wider variety; the criteria employed, if the writer does not do the worthy Pennsylvania staff an injustice, have been that the manuscripts acquired be of scholarly value, preferably unpublished, and cheap. Operating on a necessarily limited budget, Pennsylvania has done marvels and acquired wonders in a relatively short space of years. They have managed to get quite a large number, for example, of medieval and renaissance manuscripts in vernacular languages, and this class of text has perhaps been the most neglected of all. There are, of course, comparatively much fewer vernacular texts than Latin ones extant.

Yet it must be said that there are discoveries aplenty; I have found, for example, manuscripts: localizing two of the most famous troubadours at an important court during a period when we knew nothing of them (thirteenth century); containing poems of Petrarch and his contemporaries, demonstrably written in Petrarch's lifetime (not after 1370); by a hitherto unknown relative of Dante, expelled with the great poet from Florence in 1301, recounting in moving terms his struggle to make a new life for himself (early fourteenth century); containing a staggering mass of fourteenth century French lyric poetry, half of it unknown, including the only complete texts of the first Valentine's Day poems; and others with important medieval or renaissance scientific, magical, and literary texts which are either unknown or barely known. My learned colleagues in the rare book business have of course brought to light materials just as, if not much more, intriguing. Curiously, we often find it very difficult to sell these discoveries, but this annoying factor does not rob us of the pride and pleasure we feel in having found the extraordinary.

Why do so many disparities exist in the prices paid for and the attention given to early manuscripts? Probably the explanation lies in the comparative difficulty of reading manuscripts and the fact that one can't consult bibliographies, nor even palaeographical works in many cases, which pinpoint them. If one is offered, let us say, the first printed edition of Virgil, it is a quite simple matter to decide whether the book offered is what it purports to be; it is easy enough to collate it, its state of preservation is readily determinable, and one may read a good deal of literature about this very book. If, on the
other hand, one is offered a manuscript of Virgil, the matter is not so simple. Is it complete? In order to determine its completeness, the manuscript must be collated, the various works of the author must be identified to find out how many of them are present, and one must make some efforts to find out if the text of the manuscript is a good one, carefully transcribed, or a dreadful one hastily transcribed, perhaps from a poor source. General state of preservation is not difficult to determine, but the manuscript will have other qualities worthy of attention. Is it written on vellum of fine quality? Does it have fine illuminated initials, mediocre ones, or none at all? Is it a manuscript of noble size, or is it smallish and mean? What is its date? If it is a manuscript written in a humanistic hand, undated, it may be considered important to attempt to determine whether the manuscript precedes the earliest printed editions; and this process is by no means easy. One must frankly admit that the operations described above require rather more skill than consultation of a bibliography to find out if one has got the right book with the right number of leaves.

The difficulties are multiplied, naturally, when one is confronted with a manuscript containing a text which is not identified. One must, of course, read enough of the manuscript to obtain evidence of what it is. Then begins a search, often long and complicated, to discover if the text is well known, less well known, or apparently not known at all. In this area of the unknown quantity in manuscripts there are without any doubt still very exciting discoveries to be made. It takes time, it is often laborious, and one very frequently ends with the feeling that the truth has almost been found out, but that full revelation of the secrets of a manuscript are somehow beyond reach, just around a corner one cannot turn.

One must admit that the price of the Dyson Perrins Apocalypse, or indeed of several other important manuscripts sold in recent years, amount to big money. They represent very large investments on the part of dealers (whose risk is great), private collectors, or institutions. In fact, it is clear that the money factor is impressive enough to have commanded a good deal of attention. An audience of millions doubtless stared agape when H. P. Kraus appeared on the television show, "I've Got a Secret" with the Apocalypse and a guard. On a more prestigious level, perhaps, and one devoted rather specifically to big money affairs, valuable illuminated manuscripts and American collectors of them recently received dramatic treatment in *Fortune Magazine*, which devoted a cover and a color-illustrated feature article
Collecting Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts Today
to the subject. Widespread publicity of these kinds might possibly account for the constantly increasing interest in single illuminated leaves, a class of merchandise once quite plentiful and usually cheap, but now very scarce and often very dear if the quality is good.

And so, the variety of material available, if one is willing to look, to ferret out, is really quite extraordinary. The fun is in the "uniqueness" of manuscripts, in contrast to the "sameness" of printed books. The manuscripts-chaser is perhaps the personality who is unable to resist the charms of the unknown (surely he also has a large measure of the bargain-hunter buried in his bosom); by contrast, he who pursues the printed book seems to want the pleasures of the known, the implicitly guaranteed, the tested and measured quantity and quality. The gulf between these types is doubtless as vast as it is unexplainable; but since those addicted to manuscripts are still comparatively few, although waxing in number, they regularly acquire extremely interesting manuscripts at modest prices in a market which many people claim is both dear and exhausted. That they well recognize their good fortune is demonstrated by a veteran collector of manuscripts who said to me recently, "Why does anyone collect printed books?" Why indeed?
Incunabula and Postincunabula

THOMAS MARSTON

The traditional approach to the collecting of incunabula as specimens of early printing is being challenged today by another, more recent approach which places the main emphasis on their intellectual content.

Printing had hardly established itself as a successful trade when controversy began as to its origins, a dispute which is still not completely settled. From this controversy came the interest in the history of printing and the collecting of the earliest products of the printing press in the various cities and countries, a trend which dominated the collection of “early printing” (to adapt the term used in the title of the British Museum catalogs) until very recently.

However, in the past thirty years there has been a continually growing interest in the intellectual content of most early printed books with a consequent loss of interest in them as specimens of printing, except when such books are of outstanding importance in the history of that craft. This new concept is causing a revision in the terminus post quem of early printing. The magic date December 31, 1500, has been traditionally considered the end of the incunabula period, a satisfactory terminal date for the technique of early printing. However, when intellectual content is considered, the date 1520 is far more satisfactory as a terminal point as it marks the approximate beginning of the flood of pamphlets around the Reformation movement, causing a revolutionary trend in the manufacture of books and the final breakup of the medieval concept of unity in religion, philosophy, and government.

The approach to incunabula as “specimens of early printing” furnishes a perfectly valid basis for their collecting, as is exemplified by the great collection in the British Museum. One conspicuous result of this approach has been a greater bibliographical knowledge of

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incunabula than of any other field of printing. It has resulted in reference books of great value. It has also resulted in the production of a great many catalogs of the holdings in this field of various libraries all over the world, so that a scholar finds it relatively easy to locate a copy of a book in the incunabula period.

However, collecting by printing specimens has also produced some curious intellectual and economic distortions. To cite an example, one Jacobus de Fivizzano produced in the town of that name four editions of classical authors between 1472 and 1474 of almost legendary scarcity. He then moved to Venice where he apparently became a casualty of the depression in the printing trade of the later 1470's. Of the books which he printed, only one, the editio princeps of Michael Scotus, Liber Physiognomiae, has any claim to intellectual importance; the rest of his imprints are poorly produced copies of standard classical texts, valuable solely as curiosities. Yet these volumes were and still are very expensive books. While no one will question their rarity, their intellectual value is doubtful. The net result of collecting incunabula in the traditional manner has led to a tremendous volume of knowledge about their appearance and the most minute description of their physical characteristics with a consequent neglect of their content. Also, one might add, many of the scarce printing examples have been swallowed up by permanent collections and thus have become almost unobtainable.

Robert Proctor of the British Museum was probably the greatest exponent of this type of “imprint” collecting, yet in his later years it is obvious that he recognized its limitations; when he began the second part of his Index to the Early Printed Books in the British Museum he extended the date for “Early Printed Books” from 1500 to 1520. This was in 1903. Thirty-five years later, Sir Stephen Gaselee in writing the Preface to sections II and III of this work remarked on the continuity of content of the books, saying “... I do not discern any great decrease in liturgical books or increase in ‘popular’ literature. My general conclusion is that Proctor was right (as he usually was) in considering ‘early printing’ more or less as a unit from the beginning to 1520.” For practical purposes, Proctor’s reason for the choice of 1520 as a terminal date is satisfactory, since it stops short of the first great use of the printing press as a means of mass propaganda.

While Proctor in one sense recognized the intellectual unity of the period to 1520, the real direction in the fundamental change in the collecting of incunabula came from the medical profession, some of
whose members became interested in medical history and of necessity its close relation, the history of science. Sir William Osler was one of the earliest exponents of collecting early printing by content and A. C. Klebs was probably its most effective early propagandist, aided by such scholar-booksellers as E. P. Goldschmidt of London and the Rosenthals and Ernest Weil on the Continent.

In 1932 Klebs wrote regarding incunabula of science and medicine that in spite of the scarcity and wide dispersion of incunabula in different corners of the world, “the accumulation of reliable material has augmented to such an extent that the analysis of the contents of these books, and with that the dissemination of ideas during the period under consideration, can now be taken with a fair promise of profit.” Six years later, he published as an issue of OSIRIS his short title list “Incunabula Scientifica et Medica” which firmly established the concept of studying the content of incunabula and thus of collecting them on the basis of content. It was a pioneering work and only began to scratch the surface, as is clear to any one who has had a great deal of contact with early printed books.

A history of printing can be easily demonstrated by the right thirty or forty items and, though this is heresy, quite possibly a more effective demonstration can be made with single leaves than with the complete books. Textually, however, books printed before 1500 give us a vivid representation of the intellectual and political history of mankind from classical times. Intellectually they fall into two classifications, one, contemporary writers who represent their period in exactly the same way that Elizabethan or eighteenth century writers represent theirs; two, older writers, classical Latin authors, church fathers, medieval philosophers, theologians, and scientists, whose first appearances in print preserve for us their knowledge and contributions to literature in a way that the manuscript never could. And the period from 1500 to 1520 marks the culmination of this process in the appearance of the great scholar printers of the Renaissance, Aldus and his rival, the Giunta printing empire, Froben at Basle, and Jocodus Badius and Henricus Stephanus at Paris. By 1520, most of the major Greek authors had appeared in print either in the original or in translation and many important medieval authors had been rescued from oblivion, particularly by French and Rhenish printers.

It so happens that my personal experience as a private collector and as curator of the Yale University Library has coincided with this change in the form of collecting early printed books. In some meas-
Incunabula and Postincunabula

ure it may seem as an illuminating “case history” of this trend and I ask the readers’ indulgence in the following autobiographical account.

I have had no formal library training, my Ph.D. was taken in Middle Eastern History. I have learned what little I know of rare books the hard way, and I believe the only effective training to be the handling of many thousands of them, from seventh and eighth-century manuscript fragments to first editions of J. P. Marquand.

As an innocent young graduate student I began collecting the Latin author Juvenal, some thirty years ago. I was almost immediately intrigued by the magic date 1500. The descriptions of books dated 1500 or before were accompanied by a string of numbers with cryptic abbreviations such as H. HC. Pr. BMC., etc. and were priced $75 or more. Those dated 1501 had no mystic numbers, a very brief description and the prices began, to my pleasure, at $15. Did they look differently when they arrived? No, many of them printed before 1520 did not.

Intrigued by this problem, I obtained a copy of Schweiger’s Handbuch der Classischen Bibliographie and whiled away some spare time making statistical charts of the printing of many classical authors before 1600, based on where, when, and how often they were printed. The results confirmed the impression of my experience, that 1520, not 1500, marked the break in the pattern of printing not only as to the popularity of authors in specific places but also as to the general format of the books both in design and content, particularly in the popularity of elaborately contrived and intellectually sterile commentaries which often overwhelmed the original text. In effect and quite unknowingly I was doing for classical early printed books what Klebs had done in medicine and science.

When in the summer of 1930 the Yale University Library was moved into the new Sterling Memorial Building, the “Rare Books” consisted of a small group which had been housed in a locked section of stack, and the library as a whole was a good working library for a university of that date with a few excellent special collections. Equaling the importance of the new building was the appointment of Chauncey Brewster Tinker as keeper of rare books, a totally new position. As a great and discriminating collector, he knew and understood the value and scarcity of rare books; as a great scholar, he appreciated their intellectual value; and as a great teacher, he was eminently able to pass on to us his knowledge and enthusiasm. With
my own interest in early editions of the classics it was inevitable that I was drawn to the Rare Book Room and to Professor Tinker.

Our collection of incunabula at this time consisted of almost two hundred volumes, comprising a Gutenberg Bible, a small group of fine books given the library by William Loring Andrews and a miscellaneous hodgepodge acquired by gift or purchased for some specific research problem. It had no coherence, no objective. In 1935, Tinker had the opportunity to acquire the Ionides collection of Greek classics at a ridiculously low figure. It contained some sixty Greek editiones principes, nine of which were incunabula. This was not a great number, but it provided a direction which we could follow with our very limited funds: the acquisition of additional Greek incunabula and Latin translations of Greek works, a virtually unknown field of great intellectual importance. Fortunately we had little competition.

I was responsible for the next acquisition, my Juvenal collection, which had outgrown my limited bookshelf space. Including acquisitions resulting from a year in London, it contained about forty incunabula, editions of Juvenal or works containing extensive quotations from him and an equal number of editions printed between 1500 and 1520.

It was after my return from England in 1937 that I first met that great collector and great man Harvey Cushing who had moved to New Haven after his retirement from Harvard. I wish that I had been able to know him better but I was not living in New Haven and had been there only occasionally since 1933 when I had transferred to the Harvard University Graduate School.

Dr. Cushing was filled with his plan to unite his collection with those of J. H. F. Fulton and Klebs to form the Historical Medical Library of the Yale Medical School. This would in effect form one of the great collections of medical incunabula.

My purpose in mentioning these three collections, the Ionides collection of Greek books, my own Juvenal collection, and that of Cushing is not to emphasize the importance or richness of these as collections of incunabula, but rather to show that the incunabula therein were only a part and a small part of three collections which were essentially based on subject matter collected in an historical manner. To use an analogy, they were vertical in scope rather than horizontal as a collection of printing specimens would be.

In 1940, Bernhard Knollenberg, who had recently been appointed librarian, felt that one of the major weaknesses of the library was its
poor collection of incunabula and tossed the problem to J. T. Babb, D. G. Wing, and myself for specific recommendations. The problem reduced to its simplest was how to come up with a plan of collecting which would provide the greatest gain in an intellectual sense with the frank fact that we had virtually no funds to expend on such a collection. This immediately threw into the discard any ideas of collecting specimens of printing or illustrated books on an extensive scale. These were luxuries only to be indulged in occasionally. Mr. Wing and I both felt that there were many intellectually important incunabula on the market at ridiculously low prices. We further felt that by and large we would obtain a representative collection of printing if we bought by content alone. We frankly acknowledged that this method of collecting would almost entirely eliminate the illustrated book. So we proposed to collect incunabula on the basis of subject only, and with special relationship to strong collections of later periods already existing in the library.

Fortunately for us, chance soon exposed us to one of the pitfalls of collecting incunabula. A series of collections were given to us in rapid succession, each containing one incunabulum. At this stage in our collecting each additional incunabulum seemed to us a pearl of great price. Each one was the same text, Herolt's *Sermones discipuli* of which we already had a copy. Through the generosity of friends we were soon in danger of having the world's finest collection of one of the dullest incunabula. Even today, I shudder when I see a copy of Herolt. But the experience taught us to limit ourselves to but one copy of a text, considering of course each scholarly edition as a separate text. This criterion naturally applied only to our purchases, as we had no desire to control gifts. One other consideration was also added, that there was really no sense in competing with an already established superb collection. Therefore, Savonarola and *Imitatio Christi* were left to Harvard; Vergil, except for representative editions, to Princeton; and Dante and Petrach, again except for representative editions to support our collections of later editions, to Cornell.

The outbreak of World War II, followed by the entrance of our country into the war, cut us off from our supply of material from abroad with the result that we rapidly developed a surplus of funds. Mr. Babb, then acting librarian, raised the point of the use of these funds, whether to buy books in stock in this country, or to save the money for use after the war. Mr. Wing and myself, knowing the low prices of certain materials particularly the postincunabula and the
later sixteenth century books, recommended buying as much as we could immediately, and an incredible flood of books descended on the Yale Library which was to continue for the next ten years or so.

However, it was not until after the war that the collection of incunabula began to grow by leaps and bounds. Three elements are necessary for any collection: a supply of material, an interest in and knowledge of the field of collecting, and available funds. The Yale Library found in the late Louis M. Rabinowitz a friend who was interested in the Library in general and the incunabula collection in particular. In the ten years before his sudden and untimely death in 1957, he gave the library some 533 incunabula, a large collection in itself. These ranged from the Gutenberg Catholicon on vellum and Caxton's Dictes and Sayings of the Philosophers, down to ephemera of considerable historical importance.

As for interest and enthusiasm and knowledge of the field it was up to us to provide it. Interest and enthusiasm we had in great abundance. Knowledge of the field and discrimination grew with experience. (I use the plural "us" not out of modesty but because while I may have started the ball rolling, I received wholehearted support from many others from the librarian on down).

Lastly and most important was the problem of supply. The late rare book dealer Charles Stonehill in 1947 made some extraordinary purchases on the Continent, the largest of which was the stock of manuscripts, incunabula, and early sixteenth century books held by the firm of Jacques Rosenthal in Munich. When the incunabula and manuscripts began to arrive, I would go to Stonehill's shop in New Haven and help his partner Robert Barry unpack them. This might be termed, I guess, getting in on the ground floor. However, when the postincunabula came, a more direct method was adopted: the crates were delivered to the library, unpacked there; and then the volumes we did not want were trucked to Barry's shop. I suppose this might be termed getting in on the sub basement. I have no idea how many sixteenth century books there were but they numbered in the hundreds. (Mr. Barry tells me that we bought about 1500 early sixteenth century books.)

Of course, in handling materials such as this in volume, we had to establish some categories and priorities fitted to the other collections in the Yale Library. This meant that we had to have a good understanding of the content of each book we purchased.

Shortly after this, H. P. Kraus acquired a large group of incunabula
from the estate of the late Joseph Martini, rare book dealer of Lugano, and we had the opportunity to acquire an important group from this collection. In 1952, when Otto Ranschburg took over the business of the late Lathrop C. Harper, pioneer dealer of incunabula in America, we were able to acquire a group of sixty or so fifteenth century imprints of high quality from his stock at a very favorable price.

While all this was going on, we were not neglecting the "specimens of early printing." Professor Tinker had at his disposal a fund which could be used in part for this purpose, and we were continually adding two or three books a year as opportunity offered.

Meanwhile the Law Library under the direction of Samuel Thorne was building its collection of legal incunabula from one to about one hundred, thanks in large part to a wartime accumulation of unspent funds. The Medical Historical Library was not so fortunate. Starved for funds until the past very few years, few additions were made to the superb collection of medical incunabula bequeathed by Cushing and the small group of volumes left by Klebs. We helped as best we could and the late J. H. F. Fulton gave an occasional volume but his own major interests lay in later and more important fields of medical history. Recently, a realignment of funds has released the Cushing fund for the acquisition of books, and important additions to this collection have been made.

I was called to active duty with Army Intelligence in 1950 and returned after three years in the Pentagon to be a bit overwhelmed by the over-all growth in the Yale Library. In order to find out what had happened to the collection of incunabula, I compiled a handwritten list of our holdings which was then photostated and distributed to the other Yale libraries. While doing this, I noted that there were many books which were represented in the New York-New England area by our copy only. So it was decided to publish a utilitarian little handbook of our holdings for scholarly use.4

This pamphlet had scarcely come off the press, when Willy Heimann of the Stockholm firm of Sandbergs Bokhandel arrived in New Haven. He had come at our invitation on quite another matter: we wished his firm, which deals in new as well as rare books, to act as our Scandinavian agent in the acquisition of newly published material. He had with him a list of the duplicate incunabula in the Munich Staatsbibliothek, numbering some three thousand entries. It was only a list of Hain numbers with the number of duplicate copies. He said that these were only acquirable on an exchange basis and that he
had found a group of incunabula in New York which would provide such a basis of exchange if we were interested. We were, so I undertook the job of translating the three thousand Hain numbers into Stillwell numbers, checking these against our holdings and then choosing titles in which we were interested. These came to about 450. There was, of course, no assurance that these were available. Duplicate copies might be defective or might be bound with other works or might not be available for reasons of provenance. I further supplied him with a copy of my pamphlet and briefed him thoroughly on our principles of collecting and our major fields of interest. The actual choice of the books themselves had to be entirely in his hands. About a year later, the books arrived, about fifty of them, almost all in immaculate condition in their original bindings. If I had chosen them myself I could not have made a better selection.

These events illustrate the high spots of our collecting. There was, of course, a continual flow of individual items from dealers who were familiar with our collection but, surprisingly, we made relatively few purchases from catalogs or at auction although we always carefully checked these sources. My own experience, gained in the Yale Library and by observing the growth of collections elsewhere, is that most important acquisitions come from a good dealer-client relationship rather than through public presentation via catalogs whether regular or auction. These sources are valuable for filling in gaps but most of the important and readily saleable items seldom get as far as a catalog unless the dealer is saving them for a specific project.

I felt that after the acquisition of the incunabula from the Munich duplicates our rate of growth would greatly slow down. According to Wing’s count in November, 1956, we had then 2,170 different incunabula, plus about sixty-five duplicates. This collection represented some 1,750 different texts. Language representation was fairly good considering the scarcity of vernacular texts both in proportion to the number of books printed and the scarcity of vernacular books in the current market. The figures were as follows: Italian 80, German 48, Greek 36, Hebrew 33, English 15, French 9, and Spanish and Dutch 4 each. The Greek coverage is remarkable as Proctor in his history of Greek printing lists but sixty-three Greek incunabula of which twenty are elementary grammars and dictionaries representing about four texts.

In various fields of incunabula printing, such as classical authors, church fathers, philosophy and important medieval theology, and of
course medicine and science, our coverage was excellent. As "specimens of printing" our coverage of early presses was surprisingly good and the serious gaps were few. Our coverage of the history of book illustration was mediocre; a pleasant surprise, for I had anticipated it would be bad. Our collection of traditionally important incunabula ("crown jewels," as Mr. Babb aptly calls them) had become fairly impressive. I anticipated that the future growth of the collection would be very slow, and we instituted a policy of close scrutiny of our purchase of incunabula. Yet in the past three and a half years we have added almost two hundred items, aided by two major gifts numerically rather small, but very important in quality.

Recently a new dimension was added to the collection by the acquisition from H. P. Kraus of two bundles of fragments of incunabula taken from old bindings which came from a European source and contained about fifty unquestioned proof sheets. In addition, we have found eleven pieces of ephemera, two of which were previously undescribed. The digestion of this material is a long process, but a fascinating one.

Aside from the very valuable lesson taught by Herolt's Sermons, I have learned a few other useful lessons. If you say "the only known copy," or "one of three known copies," inevitably another one turns up. The magic of scarcity can seemingly be retained only by prefixing the word "apparently" to your statement. Another thing worth remembering is that in spite of an increasing scarcity of old books, many very fine items continue to turn up, books which one is justified in feeling at times are no longer obtainable. Lastly, the success of any good collection, institutional or private, is going to depend on a favorable client-dealer relationship, because it is upon what the dealer can or will supply that the success of the collection rests.

I regret that I have been unable to say more about Yale's collection of postincunabula. These volumes are not segregated but are incorporated in the general collection according to subject.

I have been writing about my experience with one small collection in a great library. The growth of other collections at Yale has been quite as remarkable or more remarkable than that of the early printed book. Yet it seems to me that a collection of this material is an essential foundation for a great library. It is a natural heritage of the great European libraries as are their collections of medieval manuscripts. In this country we have to get them the hard way by collecting.

There remains, I think, one very valid question to be answered.
After such a collection has been made, is it used to any great extent or does it become just a monument, useful for exhibition purposes and that is all? At Yale, in the case of the Historical Medical Library, there is no question but that the aims of Cushing in forming the library have stimulated research in the history of medicine and that the incunabula provide a vital link between that library's excellent collection of medical manuscripts and the later works. In the Main Library, we have observed a steady increase in the use of the early printed books as the collection has grown, probably due to an increased scholarly interest in medieval and Renaissance studies in the past decade. Direct reactions to the collection are very few for, as every librarian knows, the only time a user expresses an opinion is when the library has not got the book he wants. We happen to consider exhibitions an important part of our educational program and in many exhibitions the presence of a few early printed books gives perspective and depth to the display and adds an eye-pleasing touch as well.

Early printed books are still relatively plentiful in the rare book market. And they remain reasonable in price for their intellectual importance except in a few specialized fields. Few libraries are faced with the problem which we had at Yale, to provide a broad general coverage of the first seventy years of printing which would fit the extensive nature of our main collection. Many libraries have collections on various subjects whose intellectual content could be given perspective and depth by the addition of a few pertinent early printed books and for this content should be the prime consideration.

References

Basic Americana

MICHAEL J. WALSH

The issue editor thinks that because of nearly fifty years experience in buying and selling Americana in a Yankee bookshop, I might have some thoughts of value to librarians and library students. It is assumed from the name of this periodical that it circulates mainly among library people. My few remarks, therefore, will be directed to such an audience rather than to my bookseller associates, although there is a close kinship between the two groups.

Historically, the relationship between librarian and bookseller has in general been more than one of mutual trust and understanding. Over and above the buying and selling, each has been helpful to the other with advice and information. This idea is interestingly expressed by L. C. Wroth in his paper “Lathrop Colgate Harper, a Happy Memory” in the Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America, Third Quarter, 1958. While Wroth writes only of the friendly help given him on many occasions by Harper, I am sure that passage of information was not always one way. Many times I have sought help from Wroth and other librarian friends, and it has never been refused.

I have been asked to tell from my experience, what, if any, are the new trends in the Americana field. There are of course new and changing trends, but in my experience the demand for basic Americana has increased tremendously. This increase in recent years has been steady, from year to year, without diminution, even through the two recessions of the fifties.

With the greatly increased American population and wealth, new libraries and great enlargement of the older libraries, the demand for Americana is greater than ever. One of the problems of the book trade today is the avoidance of empty shelves. Today there are not many so-called “dead” subjects. Almanacs, textbooks, and New England theology, except for items of importance, are not much in demand. Outside of these and a few other subjects, the Americana field is highly active.

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In my experience, the great libraries have not, in the past fifty years, generally changed their principles in buying in the field of Americana. Most of them have persisted in seeking only the significant materials that record the history, life, and ambitions of the American people. On the whole they have avoided trivia.

The library student will find plenty of informative reading on the building and development of great libraries in the periodical reports of the librarians. The annual reports of the John Carter Brown Library are scholarly and informative. This series began in 1911 when the late G. P. Winship was librarian. Wroth’s reports included the years 1923 to 1957, inclusive. The reports since then have been written by T. R. Adams, the present librarian. A library student could not use time to better advantage than to read the entire series. These attractive pamphlets are essentially scholarly articles about important books in the field of Americana before 1800.

Also to be read with profit are W. A. Jackson’s reports, Houghton Library; the Yale Library Journal; the Harvard Library Bulletin; the New York Public Library Bulletin; Boston Public Library’s periodical, More Books; the Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America; the Library of Congress Quarterly Journal; Princeton University Library Chronicle; the Library Chronicle of the University of Pennsylvania, and the Huntington Library Quarterly.

C. S. Brigham’s recently published Fifty Years of Collecting Americana tells the story of the most important period in the building of the American Antiquarian Society. These publications present a good picture of what libraries have bought and are currently buying in Americana.

The libraries at Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Dartmouth, University of Indiana, Columbia, Michigan, University of Virginia, and other universities have been tremendously enriched by gifts of outstanding and valuable collections of Americana, supplemented by what, on the whole, has been wise purchasing.

The great Americana collections at the John Carter Brown Library, the New York Public Library, the Library of Congress, and the various historical societies and state libraries have been enlarged by the steady acquisition of significant and desirable items. In addition to the growth of these libraries, our time has seen the establishment and progressive development of the great collections at the Henry E. Huntington Library and the W. L. Clements Library.

It seems to me that these institutions have changed very little in
their buying trends. They have in the main followed the tried and true method of “adding to strength.” This means that if a library is noted for having outstanding collections in special subjects, the librarian will always be trying to make those collections as complete as possible.

The real change in library buying trends has been in fields of new interest. In 1921, with the publication of H. R. Wagner’s *Bibliography of the Plains and Rockies*, a new, fascinating, and wide field was thrown open to both private collectors and libraries as W. R. Howell points out in the following chapter. Prices for some Western rarities advanced from under $100 to over $1,000 in the space of a few years. Not only the personal narratives with which Wagner dealt, but early imprints, maps, prints, the early constitutions and laws of the Western states, and items relating to the surveying, financing, and building of the Pacific railroads, the Mormons, bank and train robbers, and the cattle trade came in for terrific competition.

Recently we have seen the Civil War change from a dead subject on dealer’s shelves to one of extreme activity. It has been the recent experience of most dealers to see their Civil War shelves depleted as much as 90 per cent, with little opportunity for replenishment. The average Civil War regimental history now brings $5 to $15. Twenty years ago dealers would refuse these at twenty-five cents a volume. They were not in demand then.

Another subject in which there has been greatly increased activity in recent years is that of the personal narrative, especially in the form of diaries and journals. Students, scholars, and writers justifiably regard personal narratives as basic historical sources. William Matthews’ *Bibliography of American Diaries* has greatly helped to increase the interest in this field.

In the past few years, it has been difficult for dealers to keep up with the demand for books on American medicine, cookery, crime, rogues and badmen, the sea, whaling and pirates, aviation, science, American sport, juveniles, and some other subjects. Buyers now rarely see substantial offerings in these fields.

In the early part of the century the demand was primarily for books on the discovery and exploration period, the French and Indian Wars, the American Revolution, the adoption of the Federal Constitution, early American imprints, Indian captivities, and the early state histories. While present interest in these fields may not compare with that in the West and Civil War, dealers’ stocks on these subjects are
not what they used to be. Many books once very common are now uncommon. An example that could be cited is B. J. Lossing's *Pictorial Field Book of the Revolution*, a two-volume work. This was so common that it was not unusual for a dealer to have four or five sets in stock. Copies are no longer plentiful and it has become uncommon enough so as to be absent from most stocks.

The great sources of supply that were available to dealers in the early part of the century are in general no longer present. The private libraries in the east seem for the most part to have been dispersed. Even the American auction houses now rarely have a sale that could be called important. One of the main reasons for this has been the practice of the giving rather than the selling of many notable private collections of Americana. Our tax laws are so written that wealthy collectors find, in some situations, that it is more advantageous to give than to sell. The dealer of today must depend mainly for stock replenishment on the purchase of small lots and single items. Quick and careful reading of catalogs and the use of the telephone are now "musts" in the dealer's daily activities.

He also travels more than his predecessor. Today's fine roads and air travel make this convenient and pleasant. It is no longer unusual for a Boston dealer to fly to New York or some other eastern city in the morning, transact his business, and be home the evening of the same day. West Coast dealers are now able to visit Chicago, New York, or Boston or all three and not be absent from their desks for more than two or three days.

The voluminous body of bibliography published in our time has added tremendous stimulus to the demand for Americana. It has helped both librarian and dealer. Not many desirable books turn up these days on which no bibliographical information can be found. The great libraries and the best dealers have extensive bibliographical collections. Here are the tools of the trade, with which every library student and beginning bookseller must become acquainted. For the librarian, good bibliography saves many pitfalls by giving collations, census of copies, and other vital information. Frequently the informative notes will be the guidepost when a purchase is under contemplation.

Dealers know from experience that the most expensive bibliography nearly always more than pays for itself. No matter what the cost, good bibliography is a prime investment for both librarian and bookseller.

Another stimulus to the increased demand in our time, not only for
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Americana but for rare books in general, has been the books written about book collecting. In my opinion, the best of these are Henry Stevens’ *Recollections of James Lenox*; C. E. Goodspeed’s *Yankee Bookseller*; A. S. W. Rosenbach’s *Books and Bidders*; and A. E. Newton’s *Amenities of Book-Collecting*. These books have undoubtedly guided the footsteps of many an embryo book collector to the door of his nearest bookseller.

A natural question here is what effect the increased competition for Americana, coupled with the increasing scarcity, has done to prices. It is my opinion that Americana that is still available can be had at reasonable though, of course, much higher prices. It has not increased in cost in the same proportion as new houses and automobiles. In this particular field there has been a steady, natural advance in prices, totally unlike that in modern art, where prices have zoomed beyond all expectations.

Librarians have always been conscious of the value of public exhibitions of their treasures, and many are skillful in writing notes concerning the books to be exhibited and in describing their significance in American history. Even though I have spent a lifetime in the company of rare books, I can still come away from a well-presented exhibition with increased knowledge.

Two exhibitions of recent years, neither of which was in a public institution, have had great influence on the collecting of rare Americana. These are T. W. Streeter’s “America—Beginnings shown in honor of a visit of the Hroswitha Club on May 3, 1951” at his home in Morristown, N.J., and the “One Hundred Influential American Books Printed Before 1900 Exhibition at The Grolier Club, April Eighteenth—June Sixteenth, MCMXLVI” in New York City. The catalogs of these really notable exhibitions, with informative notes, are now collector’s items of no mean value.

Some years ago an exhibition took place at the Houghton Library in Cambridge that is not going to be equalled for quality and importance in a hurry. The show consisted of the first books printed on the continents of Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia, and North and South America! There is doubt about the earliest North American imprint, but in the light of present knowledge, the book in this exhibition could be regarded as a candidate for that honor.

Exhibitions such as these are the sparks that light the fires of collecting. More than that, they show the non-collector and the person who is not rare-book-minded the best reasons for collecting and pre-
serving the historical and literary treasures of the nation. A person showing lack of interest when viewing the first edition of the Columbus Letter or the first appearance in print of the immortal Declaration would be, it seems to me, totally devoid of sentiment.

If the reader has not left me, he will by now have the impression that Americana is not plentiful. It is not only not plentiful, but in the high-priced bracket, is very scarce. A generation ago dealers' catalogs were loaded with rare and expensive items. Today's bookseller is thankful if he can save for listing a few such items.

What of the future? It would seem that the collectors and libraries who have specialized in Americana before 1800 will find the pickings in this field slim and more expensive. A high percentage of the known material in this category is already on the shelves of institutions, never to come out. I know, because I have been one of those who helped put it there. The supply, once thought inexhaustible, is no longer available. The movement of large lots of books from private libraries, attics, and barns to bookstores is no longer taking place. Such lots invariably had one or two nice pieces of Americana.

The outlook is not hopeless, however, in at least one respect. History is being made every day. Americana since 1875 is not in general being collected. Since then our country has been in four wars, through the great depression, has seen the spread of world communism, the beginnings of the Atomic Age, and the earliest attempts at exploration of outer space. Who will say that books on these subjects will not be sought in the future?

Recent technical accomplishments have suggested the possible conquest by man of poverty and disease and the much more glamorous achievement of his transportation to the planets. There will be rare books, pamphlets, and broadsides on these subjects to be searched for, to be bought and sold, and to be given proper bibliographical treatment by future scholars.

It is not difficult to imagine Americana collectors not yet born competing for the first printing of the narrative account of the first human to make the first round trip from the earth to the moon. And, while I'll not be here to buy and sell it, some future bookseller will some day make some collector happy by offering for sale the first book printed in outer space.
As the subject of this paper is so vast, and its scope begins shortly before my entry into the book world, I will attempt to cover only those particular phases with which I have had firsthand experience. Californiana and Western Americana as a distinct feature of the book world is so new—comparatively—and so varied in its aspects, that these personal experiences are only part of the story.

H. R. Wagner, the great dean of Western Americana, once stated that the first rare western book to bring a high price was E. S. Ingalls' *Journal of a Trip to California by the Overland Route Across the Plains in 1850-51* (Waukegan (Ill.), 1852), item no. 1098 in the sale of The Valuable Private Library of Lucius L. Hubbard of Houghton, Michigan, consisting almost wholly of Rare Books and Pamphlets relating to American History. This sale was held in New York City in May, 1914, and the Ingalls brought $145.

Of course, nearly all the notable collections of Americana in existence in 1914 contained many books in the fields of Californiana and Western Americana which were acquired as Americana but not primarily as Californiana or Western Americana. Works about Drake or Cabeza de Vaca would be examples. The exception to the above was the collecting of Californiana and Western Americana by libraries and by private collectors because of almost exclusively local interest.

In July, 1932, I went from Stanford University to work for my father, John Howell, in his rare book shop in San Francisco. The shop was supposed to conduct a general business in rare books, but actually there was hardly any business at all. The year 1932 fell in the middle of the depression and we had no active collectors in any field as customers. There were some buyers, but none of them were dedicated and intelligent collectors trying to form an important library. All the
active collectors with whom my father had done business in the 1920's had stopped buying for one reason or another, mostly lack of funds.

As I had determined to spend my life in the rare book business, I set about acquiring all the knowledge that I could about the tremendously wide world of rare books, with strong emphasis on the field of Western Americana. I found that, in the case of rare books, experience in buying and selling was the best teacher; but, as I have said, there was no activity in this field, and my knowledge had to come from reading the published books about books and from picking the brains of those collectors, dealers, and librarians who had the experience. I became familiar with the working tools of Western Americana, tool Number One being R. E. Cowan's *Bibliography of the History of California and the Pacific West, 1510-1906*, (San Francisco, 1914), the “Bible” of the California collector and a book that I always kept at my elbow.

Other tools that I learned to use were: H. R. Wagner's *The Plains and the Rockies, A Bibliography of Original Narrative and Adventure 1860-1865*, published by my father in 1921; *Bibliography of the Spanish Southwest 1542-1794, An Annotated Bibliography*, (Berkeley, 1924); and *California Imprints August 1846-June 1851*, (Berkeley, 1922). The first two of these works supplemented Cowan and broadened the area of Western Americana, and the third covered the refined interest in collecting the first items printed in California during the American period.

Although Wagner had moved from Berkeley to San Marino to be near the collections which he had sold to Henry E. Huntington in the 1920's, he visited San Francisco many times and gave me opportunities to get from his encyclopedic memory complete and detailed answers to my many questions. It was most gratifying to ask Wagner for information about the rarity or importance of any book or pamphlet, as he had total recall of anything connected with books.

On becoming the librarian for William Andrews Clark, Jr., Cowan had left San Francisco, taking his large private collection of Californiana with him to Los Angeles. Cowan also came back to San Francisco frequently and I learned a great deal from him, too. His large collection of Californiana (which to a great extent was the basis of the enlarged 1933 edition of the *Bibliography*, containing five thousand Californiana titles as compared to 850 in the 1914 edition) was acquired by J. E. Goodwin, the librarian at the University of Cali-

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California at Los Angeles, in 1936. Cowan's collection was purchased before L. C. Powell became the U.C.L.A. librarian and before a department of special collections was established. Cowan items were distributed through the stacks and some valuable rarities were treated without proper respect. This collection contained many expensive rarities from the J. L. Hitchcock collections which my father had bought in 1925.

U.C.L.A. authorities were unwilling to accept the valuation that Cowan had placed on his collection ($50,000, the sum total of the prices of the individual books), but had it checked by a librarian with no experience in the rare book field, who looked up the items in American Book Prices Current (tabulating, for example, as many as ten prices on the very common Venegas) and took an average. It has always seemed to me that, if Cowan's figures were thought unacceptable, it would have been simpler and less expensive for the U.C.L.A. authorities to have secured the advice of some experts in the field.

In the 1920's G. D. Lyman of San Francisco built up the largest private collection of Californiana. He tried to acquire all of the 850 items listed in the 1914 Cowan and managed to get over 720 of them. I remember how disappointed he was in the 1930's that prices of Californiana were so low, and that there was no interest in the field even after the national economy started climbing out of the depression. My advice to Lyman was that, as he knew the field so well, he should write about the collecting of Californiana and thus stimulate new collectors. I could not, however, persuade him to take my advice, although the success of the three books he had written about the West had made him well aware of the great number of readers of California history.

The most distinguished private library of Californiana built up since the days of H. H. Bancroft was surely the collection formed by C. T. Crocker. It was not large in number of volumes, but rich in rarities and manuscripts. The very knowledgeable Edward Eberstadt, who more than any other single individual stimulated the activity in expensive rarities of Western Americana, supplied Crocker with most of the rare and important books. Crocker stopped collecting in 1926 and put his collection out on loan with the California Historical Society, which he and Wagner had helped to reorganize in 1922. Crocker later made a gift of the collection to the Society.

T. W. Norris of Livermore, California, created a fine Californiana library in the thirties and forties, largely with the help of H. C.
Holmes of Oakland. When Norris retired and moved to Carmel in 1946, Holmes bought the collection (exclusive of the manuscripts and Grabhorn books) and published a magnificent catalog which was printed by the Grabhorn Press. This catalog served many individuals as a guide to prices, but it is now out of date.

Libros Californianos by P. T. Hanna, published by Jake Zeitlin in 1931, did a great deal to guide the readers of California history in the selection of a reading library. Some who started gathering Hanna's twenty-five books, or five-foot California bookshelf, went on to collect the series of distinctive and inexpensive reprints of Western Americana issued by the Grabhorn Press from 1932 to 1937. This awakened the readers to many important source books. These reprints have become sought after, as have nearly all other distinctive reprints of Western Americana.

Since there were no active buyers of the topflight Western material in the West during the 1930's, nearly all of our treasures and, for that matter, almost all of the treasures of other western dealers in Western Americana went East.

E. D. Graff of Chicago, T. W. Streeter of Morristown, New Jersey, D. M. Frost of Boston, P. A. Rollins of New York City, and W. R. Coe, also of New York City, were the great buyers in the East (which to a Californian includes Graff's Illinois). Of these five great collectors only Streeter collected actively in the California field, and if he already had an important and expensive California item, it was very difficult to find another buyer for the same title. So we sold some items locally at far below the market price, in order to make sure that some of the great Western books stayed in the West. But even this was difficult.

A classic example of an important California item that went begging was the Pamphlet edition of the laws of California, containing the Constitution of California and Acts of the Legislature as passed by the first legislature in San Jose and printed there in 1850. It was one of five such collections known. As nobody was interested locally, I offered it to Streeter for $1,250 in 1937, but he turned it down, as he already had so much of the material contained in the volume. I then cataloged it, but nobody wanted it; at least nobody asked for it at the price quoted. However, I learned that the Law Library of the Library of Congress had more money to spend than there were books to buy and would be in the market for the Pamphlet edition of the laws of California, which we eventually placed with them. The price
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of $9,000 which I paid at the October, 1959, Parke-Bernet auction for the Cutten-Plath copy of this book, being the fifth copy known and the only one in private hands, is a commentary on the increased prices and activity in Californiana. I brought this volume back to the West Coast, where it is now in an important private collection.

In the past fifteen years other western dealers and I have secured a great many other important and valuable western books in the East and brought them West. This has been a great development of recent years. The starting point of the increase of interest and activity in Californiana dates from the publication in the fall of 1945 of a selective bibliography of Californiana entitled The Zamorano 80, a selection of distinguished California books made by members of the Zamorano Club. Not only did collectors of Californiana examine their own holdings to see what they lacked and try to fill in the gaps with original or reprint editions as suited their pocketbooks; almost all other collectors of Western Americana throughout the country generally did the same.

As the Zamorano 80 was the work of amateur scholars, all members of a collectors’ club, it is interesting to note that the library of the amateur scholar has replaced the general American library of the past. Some of these amateur scholars have written important bibliographies, articles, and introductions in the field of Western Americana.

In addition to Wagner, Cowan, and Hanna, the work of the following amateur scholars and bibliographers has had the greatest influence on the collectors of Western Americana: C. L. Camp, F. P. Farquhar, E. D. Graff, G. L. Harding, J. G. Layne, L. P. Merrill, H. T. Peters, L. C. Powell, T. W. Streeter, and C. I. Wheat.

Naturally the exciting, informative, and often scholarly catalogs of expert dealers in Western Americana are effective in stimulating the interest of collectors. In addition, the disposal at auction of great collections of Western Americana by its very nature creates enthusiasm. Among the auction sales during the last thirty-three years of important libraries devoted entirely or largely to Western Americana are the following: W. C. Braislín, March 1927; G. W. Paullin, April 1929; G. Y. Barber, October 1941; C. G. Littell, February 1945; H. S. Auerbach, October 1947; W. J. Holliday, April 1954; L. E. Bauer, December 1958; and H. W. Plath, October 1959.

The formation of the Holliday collection is typical of the manner in which many Western Americana collections have been developed. Holliday started out in the 1930’s to acquire all the books there were
to read about the area in the West where his ranch was located (Tucson, Arizona). Being a collector by instinct, he, of course, went further into the field of Western Americana.

Nearly all of the important holdings of Western Americana in the institutional libraries of this country are the result of acquiring en bloc, by gift or purchase, the libraries of private collectors. I would like to note the following collections of Western Americana in our institutional libraries: the Augustin S. Macdonald collection at the Henry E. Huntington Library, which was bought by Huntington in 1914; the Philip Ashton Rollins collection at Princeton; the Robert E. Cowan and J. Gregg Layne collections at U.C.L.A.; the Robert S. Ellison collection at Indiana University; the Donald McKay Frost collection of the American Antiquarian Society; and the William Robertson Coe collection at Yale. The continued activity of additions to the Coe collection is in part due to the large endowment secured by J. T. Babb from Coe when the latter was alive. It is unfortunate that too few institutions receive endowments for additions to the collections for which they are authorized to expend moneys.

Friends of the Library groups have assisted many institutions with extra funds to add to their collections. Certain librarians have recognized that many rare book dealers have the ear of rich alumni who are not necessarily collectors, but who can assist wholly or in part with the acquisition of notable books or collections. For example, just last year my colleague Jake Zeitlin and I raised $26,000 to assist the Bancroft Library at the University of California in acquiring a $45,000 collection of manuscripts. Our success in raising the money was due largely to the recognition by the Bancroft's director, G. P. Hammond, that rare book dealers are more than merchants.

The number of book dealers today who devote all or a good part of their time to the handling of Western Americana is easily ten to fifteen times the number of twenty years ago. Many in the 1920's and 1930's who devoted full time to such specialties as modern first editions, children's books, English literature, and Press books, have almost entirely given up these specialties and are now handling Western Americana. This is a second great development of recent years and is, of course, due to the great activity of collectors and libraries. Within the states that make up the territory which once belonged to Spain (i.e., California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas), the California collector seems to be the only one who will buy the original source books in Spanish even if he does not read the language.
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One of my complaints in the 1930's was that I could not get hold of enough money to buy any of the inactive good collections in private hands and develop new collectors to whom I could show a large quantity of interesting items. Today I, as well as other dealers in Western Americana, do not complain of a short supply of discriminating collectors or money, but rather of the short supply of good books and collections. Auction prices, particularly those realized at the already mentioned record-breaking Plath Sale, reflect the great demand that exists for these scarce books.
Literary Manuscripts and Autographs

HERBERT CAHOON

With few exceptions the purchase of autograph manuscripts and letters by libraries has been confined to this century. In earlier years, historical societies, university and public libraries frequently acquired manuscript material by gift or deposit but their purchases of manuscripts from dealers or at auction were infrequent in comparison with the present-day activity of a score or more institutions. In assembling manuscripts, literary and historical, the private collectors of nineteenth-century America bought, exchanged, and often begged desirable items; they set the pace. Some of their collections, such as those of W. B. Sprague, Israel K. Tefft, L. J. Cist, and Robert Gilmor, were dispersed at auction; others, including those of T. A. Emmet, G. L. Ford, and F. J. Dreer, became part of institutional collections. There are still important collectors today, but the role of the library as purchaser of manuscripts is much greater than ever before; it is a factor of considerable importance in every sale.

Libraries which receive significant manuscript material by gift often, but not always, find funds for additions to the collection. These additions are usually made with careful attention to the subject fields or authors already represented so that an existing collection can become stronger and thus of greater value to scholarship. A number of libraries are financially able to engage in “high-spot” collecting—the purchase of a manuscript or letter of outstanding importance even though it may relate to the library’s other holdings only in a general way. Also, a few libraries can acquire and eventually prepare for use elephantine masses of the personal papers of a literary or historical figure which may dwarf anything previously acquired.

Once a library is committed to a policy of collecting manuscripts and autographs it becomes the responsibility of the librarian or curator
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to be thoroughly familiar both with the items under his charge and
with as many details as he can learn of how and why they were
brought together. The library's attitude toward collecting will prob-
ably differ from that of the private collector but it will inevitably
reflect some characteristics of the latter, especially if it is an endowed
collection. And there will be one common denominator—the dealer.

There are in the United States, England, and on the Continent, less
than a dozen dealers who devote themselves exclusively to autograph
materials and who may be said to be knowledgeable in a field which
may range from the sign manual of Frederick Barbarossa to the sig-
nature of John F. Kennedy. Among these are Walter R. Benjamin
Autographs, Emily Driscoll, and Charles Hamilton Autographs, Inc.,
of New York City, Forest H. Sweet, of Battle Creek, Michigan, and
Winifred A. Myers (Autographs) Ltd., of London. But the antiquarian
book trade in general also has a considerable interest in autographs;
this may vary from an occasional listing or offer to extensive catalogs
devoted solely to manuscripts and autographs. It is essential that the
manuscript librarian be on the list to receive catalogs from both the
specialized dealers and those who offer manuscripts from time to
time. Whenever possible a personal acquaintance with dealers is to
be recommended; such an association may be of value to both parties
in any number of ways, not the least of which is the opportunity to
discuss mutual problems in a congenial atmosphere.

The dealer may rightly expect from the librarian services similar
to those required by the scholar. Books, manuscripts and autographs,
as well as catalogs and collections of facsimiles should be made avail-
able to him. Consultations on manuscript problems between dealer
and librarian are very much in order; the librarian, however, should
not take it upon himself to authenticate a manuscript or letter, even
when well qualified. It goes without saying that items which the
librarian has on approval from the dealer should be reported on at the
earliest opportunity, and that manuscripts that are not purchased
should not be photographed or otherwise copied. Unless other ar-
rangements have been made, payment should be made as soon as
possible—dealers will naturally tend to favor the buyer who pays
promptly. The librarian should confine his activities to those of his
own profession and not engage in book or manuscript selling “on the
side.”

From the dealer the librarian may expect a variety of services.
These include confirmation of title (to make certain a manuscript or
letter has not been stolen—at least recently), setting a price, and a
guarantee that the item is not a forgery or facsimile. When the li-
brarian enters into a private contract the burden of proof as to title
and genuineness usually falls on himself, and in such negotiations
settlement on a price can be a time-consuming matter. The advice of
a dealer concerning items which appear at auction as well as his
representation at sales are services appreciated and used by most li-
brarians.

The above paragraphs are but a brief outline of a relationship that
has in several instances developed to such a degree that more than
one university or public library owes to the dealer not only the dis-
covery of manuscript material (and not infrequently its preservation
from destruction) but the discovery of a donor for the material as
well. As in the antiquarian book trade in general, the dealer knows
collectors and their interests better than many librarians and can
often bring them together in an acquisition of great value to scholar-
ship.

The current situation in the field of manuscript and autograph col-
lecting is generally discouraging for libraries both from the point of
view of prices and that of the amount of first class material appearing
for sale. But this is a familiar complaint and acquisitions do continue
to be made. Perhaps the most surprising development of recent years
has been the marked increase in the value of manuscripts of con-
temporary authors. Competition at auction for the manuscripts of
such figures as Somerset Maugham, E. M. Forster, Sir Max Beerbohm,
and T. S. Eliot has driven their prices to record highs, and these
prices have been reflected in private sales of the manuscripts of other
authors, such as James Joyce and Dylan Thomas. Very few libraries
can afford to compete in this market but those that can seem to enter
wholeheartedly into the competition.

The philosophy behind many of these purchases at prices which
are continually setting new records appears to be one of investment
even when the buyer is an institutional library. The private collector
finds that his money invested in manuscripts or books may bring a
high rate of return; he enters into competition for the most desirable
items and prices go up. On the other hand it is only fair to state that
values in this field may also go down as many buyers at the Jerome
Kern sale in 1929 have reason to remember. Institutional libraries
recently founded and/or recently endowed with large sums of money
often feel that there is not enough desirable material left relating, for
example, to the Renaissance or the American Revolution for them to acquire. They turn their attention, therefore, mainly to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries for which choice collections and pieces are still available and pay large sums in the belief that this investment in first-class manuscripts will pay dividends in providing the raw material of scholarship and in attracting the scholar to their institutions. It is inevitable that the institution and the private collector sometimes find themselves in competition.

But manuscripts of the quality and importance of E. M. Forster’s *A Passage to India* or Voltaire’s only surviving letter to Alexander Pope do not occur for sale every day. The librarian in his reading of auction and dealers’ catalogs or consideration of special offers finds much that is far afield or not of interest to him, but if he finds a letter relating to one of his manuscripts, for example, and buys it, he is serving his institution in the best possible way. Publishers, heirs, and even the authors themselves have given manuscript pages away as souvenirs, to the great discomfort of posterity. Manuscript pages of Thackeray, Lafcadio Hearn, Lew Wallace, Robert Louis Stevenson, Frank Norris, and Stephen Crane, among others, appear on the market from time to time and are often reunited with the surviving portion of the manuscript to which they belong. And the satisfaction derived from adding a relevant letter or a missing page is in its own way comparable to that of the purchase of the Forster or the Voltaire; it is also a satisfaction that dealer and librarian can share.
Collecting Collections

CECIL K. BYRD

Every research library in America has acquired by gift or purchase a collection of books or manuscripts during the past one hundred years. If one delves into remote library history, examples of bulk acquisitions can be found in the activities of certain libraries of note in ancient and medieval times. The practice of collecting collections, then, is not singularly characteristic at the present time. What is exceptional today, particularly of libraries in the United States, is the increase in the number of collections going into libraries and the great number of libraries actively (some say frantically) seeking to increase their resources by aggregate acquisitions.

The “News From the Field. Acquisitions, Gifts, Collections” section of College and Research Libraries from January, 1955, through November, 1959, recorded 195 announcements of diversified collections that had been purchased or received as gifts by American libraries. This figure by no means represented the total flow of collections into libraries but only those considered newsworthy by the recipients.

The variety and richness of the collections acquired in the last few years may be attested by news releases or the annual library reports from such institutions as Yale, Texas, Harvard, Illinois, Kansas, Indiana, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Chicago, Cornell, Columbia, and University of California (UCB, UCLA), to mention only a few (but perhaps currently the most active) universities engaged in collecting collections. Many of the collections acquired possess great subject unity (the Hanley collection of literary manuscripts, Texas; Dylan Thomas manuscripts, Harvard; Santayana manuscripts, Columbia; the Baskette collection on freedom of expression, Illinois; Poole collection on development of typography, Indiana). Others are historical and relate to the activities of a career man (John Jay collection, Columbia; Frank E. Gannett papers, Cornell; John Hay papers, Brown). Some deal with learned disciplines in broad and peripheral aspect (Ogden collection,
Collecting Collections

California). Science in its many branches is well represented (Max Born collection, Maryland; Trent collection, Duke; Hugh Sinclair collection, Wisconsin). Music is not neglected (Sigmund Romberg and Manfred Bukofzer collections, University of California, Berkeley; Olin Downes collection, Florida State University). Regional history is desired (Streeter Texas collection, Texas; Yonge Library of Florida history, University of Florida). The list might be extended to include collections on every subject that has occupied the thoughts of civilized man and recorded by him in some written form. The aim is to demonstrate that American research libraries are, seemingly, unappeasable in their quest for collections that will measurably increase their scholarly resources.

This traffic in collections can be explained. The growth of our newer universities into graduate and research-centered schools, and curricular expansion in the older institutions of higher learning, create need for an ever growing corpus of research materials. These demands for increased library resources, providing urgently needed materials to strengthen existing collections or to give a substantive start in a new area of educational emphasis, are frequently met by the acquisition of collections.

Research need alone, however, does not wholly explain this transfer of collections from private ownership into libraries. Library promotion, a greater number of collectors with institutional loyalties, and a federal income tax law which encourages gifts, or less-than value sales, lends impetus to the movement. Local financial considerations also play a more than minor role. Budgetary and administrative officers in some universities frequently make non-budgetary funds available for en bloc purchases, perhaps persuaded both by the prestige that derives from possession of a dramatic or well-known collection and the opportunity of adding statistically and qualitatively to library holdings at the same time. The widely held belief that library resources and academic respectability are related and the conviction that good libraries attract and keep good scholars is a persuasive force on the administrative mind, particularly in these days of competition for teachers, foundation grants, and research contracts.

The antiquarian book trade performs a vital function in this commerce in collections. Perhaps the least known, or appreciated, was that of intelligent adviser to the collector in his formative years long before the collection was acquired by a library. A more obvious duty is commission agent between collector and purchaser or as
CECIL K. BYRD

direct seller of a collection acquired with an institutional buyer in mind.

A few booksellers, with adequate working capital and prudent forethought, assemble attractive collections over a period of years from their own stocks and dispose of them when market conditions are favorable. There are a few instances when the bookseller has gathered a special collection at the request of a librarian who hopes to obtain special funds for its purchase or has an institutional friend in mind who may be persuaded to become a donor.

There is no published source that reveals the number of collections sold to libraries as a result of activity from the antiquarian book trade. Libraries do purchase collections directly from owners or collectors whenever opportunity exists. How extensive this practice is could only be determined by laborious inquiry.

As appraiser of gift collections the antiquarian bookseller renders a real service to the library world, as J. S. Kebabian discusses in a later chapter. Keenly aware of current prices in his own specialty, he may be expected to appraise a collection at its true market value, thus giving the donor all tax deduction to which he is legally entitled. Library literature is strangely silent on methods of appraising gift collections. It is rumored that some collections are appraised by library staff members. The ethics of staff appraisal may be questioned as well as the capability. Quite aside from competency and the legal aspects, appraisal is a legitimate function of the bookseller and it is a part of the antiquarian book business to which he is entitled.

No serious objections have been voiced against this common practice of acquiring collections. It permits libraries to add, in a single operation, books which might take years to acquire if purchased individually (if and when they come on the market). Collection purchases reduce paper work in the acquisition departments. The item cost of books in a collection is somewhat lower than it would be if the books were purchased one at a time from different sources. The library that purchases a collection, receives at little or no cost the thousands of man hours and the skill that were required to assemble it. It is safe to assume that American research libraries will continue to buy and receive collections as gifts as long as funds and friends exist.
Facsimiles and the Antiquarian Trade

LAWRENCE S. THOMPSON

The practice of making facsimiles of original texts extends into antiquity. The Alexandrians begged and borrowed texts from every possible source; but they also stole, for they realized that no copy can ever fully replace the original. Ptolemy III was so suspicious of facsimiles that he forfeited a substantial deposit to the Athenians when he appropriated the official texts of the three great tragedians. Thus Callimachus and his colleagues set the keynote for modern scholarly libraries: use any possible device to acquire an original text; but when the original is unavailable, get the best copy that can be made.

In subsequent centuries the great bookmen such as Atticus, Hrabanus Maurus, or Manutius made copies of original texts according to the best devices at their disposal, always yearning for the original, and making their copies resemble the original as closely as possible. The first modern collection of palaeographical models was probably the engraved Prova centum scripturarum (1517) of Leonhard Wagner (Wirstlin). The first complete manuscript issued in facsimile was the Martyrologium Hieronymianum from Echternach, which Baltasar Moretus engraved in copper for P. Rosweyde in 1626-33. But it was not until the turn of the nineteenth century that the absolutely faithful reproduction of original texts became possible with the inventions of Alois Senefelder. To the present day offset printing in its various forms remains the cheapest and typographically clearest medium for full-size facsimile reproduction.

Bookmen immediately seized upon lithography as an answer to the problem of making rare texts more generally available. In 1808 the first incunable was reproduced by lithography in J. Christ’s Über die frühesten universalhistorischen Folgen der Erfindung der Buchdruckerkunst. Thus the Mahnung wider die Türcken (Mainz, Printer of B-36, ca. 1454; Hain 10,741) becomes a sort of an incunabulum bis,
for it was the first of approximately a hundred fifteenth-century im-
prints (except other broadsides) to be reproduced by offset between
1808 and 1924.8

The history of photography and its micro-applications is well
known. Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries
photographic techniques of all sorts were used for the reproduction
of rare printed books and manuscripts. In the early twenties there
was the quixotic and fantastically expensive job of reproducing The
Kentucke Gazette by photostat. About the same time more practical
scholars began extensive efforts to make exact type-facsimiles.4 Aguiló
even printed with old types themselves.5 The publications of the Type
Facsimile Society, the Gesellschaft für Typenkunde des XV. Jahr-
hunderts, and of other agencies and individuals—some as offset re-
prints, some as photographic reproductions, and some as type-fac-
similes—multiplied the number of early printed books that became
generally available. A third of a century ago Margaret B. Stillwell
recorded some of the more important facsimile publications, and they
were impressive.6

Actually the type-facsimile has a relatively ancient history, going
back to the early eighteenth century. At a meeting of the Bibliographi-
cal Society in 1926 A. W. Pollard traced the history of the genre from
about 1710 on, emphasizing the special value of this technique to bibliographical scholarship.7 G. R. Redgrave carried on the story
into the realm of photographic facsimiles, beginning with Sir Henry
James’ Report on Photo-Zincography (1862).8 R. W. Chapman de-
scribed the Oxford type-facsimiles of first editions of English poetry.9
He mentioned some of the advantages of the type-facsimilist over the
photographer in creating a reasonable imitation of the original. He
gravely advises that he had “taken such precaution as seemed prac-
ticable against the danger of fraud, which Mr. Wise has urged me
not to under-estimate.”10 Concluding the symposium, W. W. Greg
spoke rather disparagingly about the legibility of photographic fac-
similes, but he admitted the need for both type and photographic
facsimile.11 However, in the short report of the discussion, it was
clear that Stephen Gaselee, Lord Crawford, and Sir Frederic Kenyon
stood firmly for the virtues of photography.

The latter gentlemen were especially impressed by collotype work,
doubtless thinking of such masterpieces as the Insel-Verlag’s forty-two
line Bible and the Grimani Breviary. Unfortunately these facsimiles
and others in their category are very expensive, and the Insel-Verlag
B-42 is itself a crown jewel in a rare book room. The English bibliographers had not yet envisioned the large-scale production of microphotographic copies and the multiplicity of bibliographical problems to come with it.

There can be no question that reproduction of manuscripts and scarce printed books is a pious act. If there had not been complete reproductions of Abbess Herrade von Landsberg's Hortus deliciarum when the University of Strassburg Library burned in 1870 or of the Heures du duc de Berry when the library of Torino burned in 1907, these precious works would have been lost forever. In the nineteenth century considerable thought was applied to a logical policy of reproducing manuscripts. For example, in 1840 Friedrich Ritschl quite properly proposed these categories of manuscripts for reproduction: (1) manuscripts with hitherto unknown texts, (2) manuscripts in a difficult or deteriorated script; (3) manuscripts which are the only sources for certain writers; and (4) manuscripts which will always be the primary basis for certain texts. His logic had little effect on his colleagues, although certain great series, notably the Codices graeci et latini photographice depicti (1897-) and Father Ehrle's Codices e Vaticanis selecti phototypice expressi (1899-), did come to pass. The Scandinavians, above all the Munksgaard firm in Copenhagen, have been singularly active in this field.

There will always be the meticulously produced facsimiles of the monumental printed books and manuscripts of the past, and it is encouraging to observe that these things are on the increase. The Book of Kells and the Lindisfarne Gospels, in facsimile, would no more affect the value of these pieces, if they were on the open market, than a Christmas card reproduction of an old master affects the value of its original. The problem with the facsimiles of cornerstone pieces is rather, how much of this sort of thing can the market bear and what standards of quality should be observed in producing them?

The less pretentious full-size facsimiles are equally innocuous as far as their effect on the market is concerned. For one thing, a large proportion of facsimiles are of unica or of works surviving in very few copies. The originals either do not come on the market or come so infrequently as to be prize catches in any event. Thus the "Augustan Reprints" seem to have had absolutely no effect on the value of the originals when they appear. The same thing is true of the offset reprints of scholarly works, especially German works which have become scarce (e.g., the reprints of the Akademische Druck- und Ver-
lagsanstalt). The only difference here is that the paper of the modern reproduction is generally substantially better than that of the original. Anyone owning a Kuczynski in reprint would never want the newsprint original, but what dealer would be so foolish as to offer the latter?

There has never been any serious debate about the effect of full-size facsimiles on the book trade. There have been grave reservations about the effect of publication on the value of manuscripts. For minor authors there is little doubt but that the market value of manuscripts is decreased either by microfilming or by publication. It is unreasonable to pay more than a nominal price for letters of, say, Richard Harding Davis or Sarah Orne Jewett, if they have been filmed and are available to all comers. (A security film, to be used only by permission of the owner of the manuscript over a specified period of time, is a different matter.) Likewise, if material of this calibre has been competently edited, it will have less appeal to the collector than if it is unpublished.

On the other hand the sought-after and even some less important pieces are not likely to be affected either by photographic copying or by publication. The author is indebted to J. C. Wyllie for the following instructive table on the values of Thomas Jefferson letters at different times:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value of Dollar</th>
<th>Market Value 1930-40</th>
<th>Market Value 1940-50</th>
<th>Market Value 1950-60</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T.J. letter, unpublished</td>
<td>$25</td>
<td>$40</td>
<td>$60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Another, unpublished</td>
<td>$55</td>
<td>$60</td>
<td>$75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T.J. letter written 4 July 1776, unpublished</td>
<td>$2,100</td>
<td>same letter</td>
<td>now published</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$3,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is obvious that publication, in any form, of the cornerstone pieces simply whets the collector's appetite. Libraries are likely to be reasonably satisfied with any accurate text, but the private collector will maintain the demand for originals on all levels of importance. At times this policy on the part of libraries is not tested carefully, for microfacsimiles sometimes cost as much as a relatively inexpensive manuscript or rare book.

It is a well-nigh universal notion among dealers that microforms and the latest by-product, cheap electrostatic copying in full-size, have had little effect on the trade. At least the effect is not perceptible,
Facsimiles and the Antiquarian Trade

so they say, in their dealings with knowledgeable librarians whose “inner sense of conviction seems to arrive only from primary evidence” (Bern Dibner at the meeting of the Rare Books Section of the Association of College and Research Libraries in Montréal, June 20, 1960). On the same occasion at which these golden words were uttered, Jake Zeitlin stated the case for original sources more elaborately: “‘Why,’ asks the uninformed person, ‘can’t we just depend upon reprints or the latest editions?’ Fortunately the growth of descriptive bibliography, the development of a new method of textual research has conclusively proved the unreliability of scholarship based on facsimiles and current editions alone. The labors of McKerrow, Greg, Todd, Bowers, and others are now bearing fruit in fields other than literature. A re-examination of the texts of Galileo, for instance, may be the basis for revising our notions of what he did at the tower of Pisa.”

Some of the refinements in photography and offset printing during the last quarter of a century have mitigated somewhat a few of the strictures of W. A. Jackson in his address to the Bibliographical Society of America at Cincinnati in 1940 on “Some Limitations of Microfilm,” but the fundamental objections to the unreliability of the photographic image as a basis for final conclusions remain. There is still the possibility of confusion such as M. H. Spielman’s identification of a colon instead of a period because of the fly-speck in the Halliwell copy of the first state of the Droeshout portrait of Shakespeare. In the course of microcarding the texts of the books listed in Wagner-Camp, this author was puzzled on two occasions by supernumerary maps, in neither case described in other copies of these books. In one case the map was even drawn by the same man responsible for the frontispiece map. Inquiries at the sources revealed at once that some industrious cartographic grangerizers had been at work, and a note to this effect was inserted in the first frame of the microfacsimile. While it would increase the cost of micropublishing fantastically to hire a competent bibliographer to check each exposure, it is the solemn duty of every micropublisher and facsimile publisher to have an experienced supervising bibliographer. The latter cannot describe every item in detail and analyze each variation, but he has a sixth bibliological sense for noting certain essential points of information.

While reproduction techniques have improved, the development of certain new devices essentially welcome to scholars, have brought new dangers. Continuous printing from microfilm by the electrostatic
process (which will be even cheaper when the basic xerox patents expire soon) is a boon to scholars who cannot adjust themselves psychologically to the use of microforms as well as to the rest of us who like the feel of codex books. Yet the inability of xerox to reproduce continuous tone necessitates the examination of each negative to specify silver prints for exposures that do not turn out well. Failure to do this once almost had dire consequences for a vital piece of research in America’s greatest business (in terms of money that changes hands), the thoroughbred industry. Two tables in *Racing Form* had bold-face numerals on past performances so distorted in a xerox enlargement as to deceive the hippic scholar completely. Fortunately, the original negative was available for correcting the electrostatic print.

If, then, there are so many dangers in the use of microfacsimiles, why do libraries, businesses (whose archives are primary sources), and individuals invest tens of millions of dollars annually in microforms? The microform exists for three basic purposes: making scarce or hard-to-acquire (not necessarily expensive) source material generally available; preservation; and reduction of spatial needs. All three objectives are eminently legitimate and will continue to be, regardless of sentimental or psychological objections to facsimiles in reduced form. The second (preservation) is especially significant for the scholar who needs original documents. He might as well reconcile himself now to giving up certain printed works such as modern newspapers, many other books and serials published in the last century, and, *mutatis mutandis*, certain private documents, the ultimate prey of neglect, fire, water, or vermin, vis-à-vis a microfilm made by a far-sighted librarian or archivist.

The immediate purpose of most libraries for investing in microforms other than 35 mm film of newspapers is to make hard-to-acquire source materials generally available. There is no good reason why a library should reject a text in microform if it is the only one available. We must accept what we can acquire, a fact brought home only too clearly by “paperbacks” which do not appear in “hard-cover.” (And these pieces, by the way, we should film in a single master negative for the library, in defiance of all copyright, if the publisher does not issue an edition that can stand the rough-and-tumble of library circulation.) It is the responsibility of the individual scholar to ascertain the point beyond which he cannot go with the microfacsimile. He cannot expect his own library to provide him with seventy-odd First
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Folios, and he alone can decide when he can cease to depend on microforms and betake himself to the Folger.

Microforms are not cheap, especially in the bulk in which the scholar needs them. In view of the facts that they are costly, relatively little used, and secondary as scientific evidence, does each library need to own its own set of them? Or can we depend on certain central depositories such as the Midwest Inter-Library Center, which subscribes to several projects for all twenty of its members? The answer lies in the relative demand for the material, and this demand varies. We all need a film file of the New York Times. On the other hand, only Ohio and Kentucky libraries need a film file of the Cincinnati Enquirer, and others can depend on interlibrary loan for this regional paper. Some libraries which support strong academic programs in French and Spanish literature need to have the microcard editions of French and Spanish drama issued by Falls City Microcards available for immediate reference, but others may depend on indefinite loan of large groups of these plays from M.I.L.C. or some neighbor. The problem of book selection cannot be escaped, even in the golden age of microforms.

What, then, is the reasonable attitude of the librarian who has all these riches at his disposal? Should he be satisfied with the microform, or should he seek the original text? Again, the answer varies with the situation. There is little point in trying to keep the complete original file of the Patent Office Gazette as long as we have a film and may rest secure in the knowledge that several files of the original exist, even though mutilated by oversewing and heavy trimming. A land-grant college with large responsibilities in the sciences but with eager and imaginative scholars in its English Department will have to tell the latter to be content with the microcards of, say, the Lost Cause Press’ “British Culture Series” rather than investing tens of thousands in the originals. No dealer will have any trouble disposing of the few originals that turn up to libraries with primary responsibilities in eighteen and nineteenth-century English literature.

On the other hand, a university with graduate programs or even simply undergraduate majors in English and American literature cannot be satisfied with the valiant efforts of University Microfilms or the Lost Cause Press to supply all its needs. To be sure, none of us can acquire everything in the originals, and few of us can acquire even substantial collections. But to let loose an allegedly educated man who has never handled original texts in his field is to create a
pseudo-intellectual monster. To get the brown dust of rotting spines of the Serial Set on your hands, to smell the mildly nauseating Soviet book cloth, or to inhale the centuries of rancid butter that permeate Tibetan block books is to have a bit of another age or culture rubbed off on you. The student who goes through his courses handling only modern editions, however accurate, and facsimiles is little better than an intellectual voyeur. He must realize that no library can be all things to all men, that he must use facsimiles and modern editions judiciously, but that he must always strive for the original texts when feasible and possible.

This is an accurate reflection of the views of most collectors, dealers, scholars, and librarians, indeed, rather a sort of confessio fidei. A few collectors and dealers can afford to be somewhat cavalier in their notions about microforms, but sooner or later they will realize the need for microforms if they conduct any extensive studies. Scholars, who deal in masses of material, and libraries, which deal in masses of scholars, have long since given up ideas about operating only with originals. A high official in a great continental auction house once told this writer that the microform business was “fascinating,” but, he added, “I hope we never have to sell things of this sort.” Six months later he wrote begging for a film of a unicum, a Harveian oration, the only one in perfect condition.

If a librarian is satisfied with any facsimile of a work that is significant in the original for any reason, he does not deserve to own the original, and he would not buy it if he had the dealer’s price in his pocket. On the other hand, those librarians who appreciate the value of original texts will only be stimulated to better things if they own a microform or other facsimile of a work in a field in which they have collecting responsibilities.

Bibliographical Notes

Facsimiles and the Antiquarian Trade

10. The facsimilist’s first commandment, regardless of his medium, is to indicate clearly the location of the original, his permission to copy (when necessary), and the size of the original (in the case of photography, laying an inch-centimeter scale on the first page beyond the half-title). No fraud is then possible.
12. Löfler, op. cit., p. 147.
15. On another occasion I was able to identify a cancel on a microcard negative by referring back to the inch-centimeter ruler on the first exposure. (An unvariable rule, but one rarely observed, for microfacsimiles.) The photographer had thoughtfully and carefully—but not quite carefully enough—altered his reduction ratio to make this odd-looking page with a different size of type conform with the others.
The Training of Rare Book Librarians

ROLLO G. SILVER

Within the last few years, there has been an increased demand for rare book librarians, a demand which, in the opinion of many, should be supplied by the library schools. Library schools, however, have been unable to fill such requests in sufficient quantity, seldom even in sufficient quality. Such a shortage is, of course, by no means confined to rare book librarians; it exists in many other fields of librarianship. The employer who today bemoans the lack of rare book librarians has probably lamented the shortage of catalogers yesterday and will probably look in vain for a reference librarian tomorrow. In this respect, the short supply of rare book librarians is only in part owing to lack of appropriate training in library school; it also exemplifies the general lack of manpower in the profession.

Nevertheless, some graduate students, finding themselves attracted to the prospect of a rare book room, do appear at one's door from time to time, if only to inquire about the possibilities of a career. They are puzzled young people who have failed to obtain much definite information about a training program—small blame to them since very little exists. The library schools, harried by the great demand for librarians of all sorts—from administrators to Zatocoders—have had what seemed to be more pressing problems to consider. Informal discussions about rare book education have occurred over highballs at meetings of librarians and collectors, but few people, whether they be librarians, collectors, or educators, have ever put their ideas in print.

Obviously, the reason for the lack of literature lies in the fact that, until recently, the problem did not exist. The staff of a typical rare book collection formerly was comprised of the librarian and one or two assistants who knew how to type. The librarian, in addition to doing all the jobs from acquisitions through cataloging to reference

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work, also had some time left for scholarly research. The assistants handled all the clerical work, oiled the bindings, and often assisted in research. If the collection happened to be part of a larger library system, the librarian was relieved of some of the technical processes—and probably an assistant as well. The image of that collection comes readily to mind: the attractively furnished and paneled room, often containing nothing more than the books collected and endowed by one person, the long library table in the center, the easy chairs facing the elaborate fireplace under the portrait of the donor. Fortunately, these rooms still exist to exemplify a less functional but more craftsmanlike period.

Finding a librarian for such a collection was not too difficult; a specialist in the subject of the collection might be available, a librarian—active or about to retire—might be selected, in some instances the librarian came with the collection. In one place or another, the person who was most appropriate for the position could be found. Furthermore, he usually wanted it, was delighted to get it, and worried not about “opportunities for advancement” or fringe benefits. He did not, in fact, expect to advance; he had arrived where he wanted to remain, the lucky man or woman.

While a few of these collections were housed in their own buildings and governed by a board of trustees, most of them were to be found in college and university libraries, some in public libraries. As these institutions grew, books accumulated which, because of value, content, or rarity, had to be shelved under conditions of security. These went, in increasing numbers, to the rare book rooms. Thus the scope of the collection enlarged; the “Rare Book Librarian” became “Curator of Special Collections,” acquiring a staff of professional assistants. Today, the rare book rooms employ their own reference librarians and catalogers. This rather astonishing growth in size and scope of collection may be attributed to various factors: the general expansion of colleges and universities, the need for research materials because of the competition for faculty, and the income tax laws which often make gifts a profitable transaction on the part of a donor. One may expect these conditions to continue. One may also look to a constant if not augmented demand for rare book specialists.

It is apparent, therefore, that the problem of supplying these specialists has become more complicated. Rare book librarians, i.e., custodians of special collections, are not the only professional librarians needed for these collections; catalogers, reference librarians, and first
professional assistants must also be provided. At present, the need for people in these lower echelons is even greater than the need for rare book librarians. This statement will not surprise anybody familiar with library management, but it is set down here to emphasize the ambiguity of the term "rare book librarian" as used in and out of the profession. Furthermore, distinctions must be made if training is to be considered. Obviously, the training of a rare book librarian is different from the training of a first professional assistant.

To begin with the lowest step on the ladder of rare book librarianship, that of the first professional assistant, the most appropriate background for this position, besides the baccalaureate degree, may be acquired by working as an aid in a rare book room, or clerking in an antiquarian bookstore, or attending library school. The first would provide an intensive knowledge of one library system and one collection, the second would insure an extensive knowledge of the book market and the dealers, the third would provide a more general knowledge of libraries and books. Here it might be well to point to the dilemma of the library schools in training first professional assistants because, ideally, they ought to be the source from which they flow. It is certainly no secret that many a rare book librarian has been dismayed because his new library school graduate knows comparatively little about the world of rare books. And, using this experience to make other assumptions, the rare book librarian goes on to declare that library schools are a waste of time, they teach mechanics not books, and, after all, he did not need to go to library school, etc., etc. Such statements are, of course, neither wholly true nor wholly false. They stem from a general misunderstanding of the present condition of our educational system.

Few people who have been away from schools and colleges for more than twenty-five years realize how much has changed—unless they have read Jacques Barzun. The college student today does not possess the training in languages, in the history of literature, in the disciplines of accuracy and clear communication which prevailed some years ago. And so students come to graduate library school without adequate background. In short, to one person at least, it seems as if, in the humanities, the colleges are now doing what the high schools used to do, and the graduate schools are doing what the colleges used to do. If this were not so, library schools would not have to spend time explaining the most elementary research methods and writing techniques, or introducing the scholarly journals in litera-
The Training of Rare Book Librarians
ture to students who have majored in the subject, or introducing Evans, Sabin, and Writings on American History to students who have majored in American history, or even insisting that quotations and bibliographical citations must be accurate.

Languages constitute another source for discouragement. Few students know one other language, let alone two. How, then, does one expect to get assistants for Americana who know Spanish and French? What does one do for a librarian of a subject collection who says, “I’d like an assistant who knows at least three other languages. After all, we have eleven languages in our collection.”? The lack of languages cannot be eliminated in library school, but, in order to make progress towards librarianship, the library school attempts to fill in some of the gaps in undergraduate education. All of which means that progress in library school is slower than the rare book librarian thinks it should be. Furthermore, he tends to forget that library schools must first train a person to work in a library before they can train him to work in a rare book collection. If a student expects to make a career of librarianship, he should be given a basic foundation or, as the jargon of education terms it, a core curriculum. This calls for courses dealing with the history and significance of libraries, the principles of cataloging and classification, reference books and methods, as well as courses in the literature of particular fields. Given one academic year in which to do the job, there is time for only a few more courses in one’s specialty. In this respect, the problem of the rare book librarian is no different from that of the student intending to specialize, for instance, in music librarianship or in government documents. A student who intends to work with rare books can learn something about the history of printing, advanced bibliography, and perhaps do some research for a seminar before he receives his degree. Then he reports for work in a rare book room not knowing nearly as much as his employer thought he would. However, he has been trained to work in a library; certainly little more than that can be expected in one year.

If one year is not enough, what about two? The thought of a second year brings forth all sorts of wonderful possibilities: courses in the history of collecting, the rare book market, preservation, printing techniques, administration, public relations, perhaps even a tour of rare book libraries, not to speak of the clubs of collectors. As desirable as this would be, it is certainly not practical. What with the cost of a graduate year, few students could afford another without financial aid. Moreover, it is extremely doubtful that enough students
would register to make such a program worth-while. At present, then, the only workable approach to the problem of advanced courses would be a summer term.

The surprisingly large attendance at the Charlottesville Rare Books Conference in June, 1959, seems to be sufficient evidence that, if the proper program were arranged, there would be enough interest to warrant it occasionally. The archivists now provide such a course; the rare book librarians should be able to do the same for themselves. Manifestly, the program of study must require academic standards for admission as well as for credit. A summer session combining class work and informal discussions among students and experts might turn out to be, in effect, a junior institute for advanced study. When this program has been successfully established, the library schools could then take over, offering more formal programs, including work in epigraphy and paleography, in incunabula and Americana, as well as advanced research in particular disciplines. When the library schools do undertake such programs, the libraries must be able to offer positions carrying the rank and salary appropriate to this training.

Until one or another facility for advanced work is available, the rare book librarians will have to train their own assistants. Whether the assistant should have a library school degree rather than a year of work in a library or in the rare book trade depends upon his future prospects. If he is already assured of a position in the library of his choice and he possesses an adequate background, the degree may not be too important. But if he plans to move from library to library or if he is not yet sure of the direction of his interest, a library school degree becomes a passport, enabling him to cross civil service borders and giving him some protection in moving from one division of librarianship to another.

Once ensconced in a rare book collection, the first professional assistant finds that the rate of his education is determined solely by his interest and ability. The books, catalogs, and bibliographies are readily available; his colleagues and their visitors bring him the unwritten lore of the rare book world. With the discovery of an unrecorded cancel, or a new issue, he begins to feel at home. And, if all goes well, he will be ready for promotion in a few years. It is such training that develops the next level of librarian: the cataloger or reference librarian.

But what about the training of the rare book librarian, the chief, the curator of special collections? Six years ago, the distinguished
The Training of Rare Book Librarians

director of the Pierpont Morgan Library, F. B. Adams, Jr., printed his own thoughts on the problem:

Where shall we look for the book-loving professionals that we need to staff our rare book rooms? I think they will best be found in the graduate schools that give advanced training in the sciences and the humanities. Do not, please, misunderstand me when I say this. I am not trying to run down the library schools. Anybody who has worked in a European library will testify at once that the professional librarians of this country are a tremendous asset to scholarship. But I feel that the ideal rare book curator is more closely akin to the historian, the musicologist, or the English Ph.D., than he is to the technically trained librarian. And I believe that the curator can gain a sufficient knowledge of library techniques by brief indoctrination at a library school, followed by working visits to established rare book collections. There should be more such working visits, or temporary exchanges of personnel; one learns a great deal of painting or printing or surgery by working with various experienced practitioners.

Similar opinions have been expressed by others, though not as succinctly. One wonders, of course, what Adams means by “brief indoctrination at a library school.” After all, the M.S. degree, including some time devoted to rare books, can be acquired in ten months. If he is thinking in terms of two, three, or four months, what courses would be omitted or what, for instance, would a “brief indoctrination” to cataloging and classification be? One thing, at least, is certain: Adams agrees that some library school training is valuable.

His major point, however, is that “the ideal rare book curator is more closely akin to the historian, the musicologist, or the English Ph.D., than he is to the technically trained librarian.” Here the emphasis is on scholarship and research, attributes characteristic of the rare book world. If Adams is taken literally, there need be no dispute. Ideally, the curator should be primarily a scholar. Practically, several questions arise. Is there a director above the curator who will be responsible for administration and public relations, both of which are time-consuming? How many libraries today think that they can afford a scholar-curator? Within the last few years, to cite an example, a well-known rare book library in a university became quite a problem because, in the words of the director of the university library, it “was not paying its way.” Thirty or forty years ago, a rare book collection with two or three readers a day and a scholar turning out monographs needed no further justification. Today, more is required; friends and
possible friends must be cultivated intensively, not only for books and manuscripts but also for additions to the endowment; adequate publicity must be secured. In other words, the trend from exploitation of resources to growth of resources has altered the characteristics desired in a rare book librarian. To be sure, a “productive” scholar who is charming enough to wheedle a First Folio this week and a Bay Psalm Book next week, who is able to supervise a staff of eight or ten or more, and who would appear in a different city every weekend would be an excellent rare book librarian. He would also be, it might be added, an excellent college president. Unfortunately, there are too few such people available for rare book rooms. Therefore one must settle for less and the trustees find themselves deciding among X who is a fine scholar, Y who is not as good a scholar but “gets around,” and Z who is not as good a scholar either but is more attractive than X or Y. If the trustees feel they must make the library “bigger and better,” they will consider qualities other than scholarship. Another factor is money. Book collectors are usually people of means who live in good style. To be able to associate with them, as a rare book librarian should, requires more money than institutions pay to members of their staff. Travel funds, not to speak of entertainment funds, are inadequate, and yet the rare book librarian is expected to join weekends at this collection or that, to have the John Jameson ready when Mr. and Mrs. Doe arrive. Here is something more for the trustees to consider: as good a scholar as X is, he would be strapped.

Today, academic training is only a part of the equipment of the rare book librarians. Neither the library schools nor the other graduate schools can be expected to turn them out unless they also possess additional personal qualifications. This implies that recruiting for the profession of rare books must be conducted with increasing care. It is neither fair to the student or his employer to portray the rare book collection as a retreat for bibliographical scholarship. Nor is it fair to imply that sound scholarship is the sole requirement for advancement to the top level. In the middle of the twentieth century, the rare book collection has been moved a little closer to the market place.

References

Friends of the Library and Other Benefactors and Donors

FRANCES J. BREWER

WHERE THERE ARE FRIENDS, there is wealth. If these words, written by the great master of Roman comedy, Plautus, more than two thousand years ago still hold true, libraries today must be wealthier than they were about forty years ago when they first acquired “Friends.”

We have come a long way since 1922, when the first “Friends of the Library” group connected with a public library was started, and since 1925, when Harvard University organized the first university group. There are no statistics available as to the number of Friends organizations in the period from 1925 to 1935.

The Friends of the Library movement was formally acknowledged in 1934 when the American Library Association established a committee to “encourage the formation of Friends of the Library groups.”

By 1938 about one hundred Friends groups had reported to the A.L.A.; by 1950 the number of public library friends had tripled, college and university groups had doubled. No statistics for the latter groups have been available since that time, but public library groups had once more doubled by 1955. If we assume that college and university groups both follow the same trend, there should have been a total of about 650 Friends groups by 1955. In 1959, L. S. Thompson in the American Library Annual stated that there were over four hundred Friends organizations in North America. We believe his estimate to be too conservative. Within the last two years we have witnessed the establishment of about half a dozen Friends organizations in the Detroit metropolitan area alone, and we are sure that Friends groups in other areas have followed the same trend. Libraries everywhere have realized with Plautus that Friends contribute to their wealth.

The author is Chief, Gifts and Rare Books Division, Detroit Public Library.
The possibilities of receiving donations of money and books for libraries are practically unlimited. They become reality by applying good public relations policies. The question is how to solicit effectively, how to make use of the gifts once they have been received, and how to show proper appreciation. Two outstanding examples indicate the extent to which Friends groups can operate: Brandeis University Library is supported and maintained completely by a Friends of the Library movement; the public library of Tacoma Park, Maryland, was organized, built, furnished, and run by Friends for twenty-five years, after which time city tax support was provided for the library through the efforts of the group.

Potentially every literate person in a given community is a library user, and every library user is a potential donor or friend of the library. It is imperative, however, that libraries know exactly what they want before they solicit contributions. R. E. Mahoney in an article entitled “It Pays to Give,” said: “The library that has determined how corporate contributions can be effectively used, and approximately how much money will be needed for each project, has taken the first step in securing a contribution.”

The history, organization, and structure, as well as the accomplishments of Friends organizations have been adequately described in publications issued in cooperation with, or by the A.L.A.’s Committee on Friends of Library and at this time there is in the proofreading stage a Friends of Libraries Handbook edited by Sarah L. Wallace of the Minneapolis Public Library. There is also the concise and informative statement on Friends groups by Thompson in the American Library Annual for 1959 (A revised statement appears in each annual issue). Suffice to say then that formal Friends groups came into existence in North America in the 1920’s and became extremely popular during and after the depression, between 1930 and 1940, when lack of public funds prompted library administrators to use every possible means to supplement their deflated budgets.

Some Friends groups were formed with only one particular project in mind and dissolved when their mission was accomplished or had failed. Some groups fade out for lack of stimulation and enthusiasm, because the initial interest is not fostered and maintained. In his survey of The Public Library in the United States, R. D. Leigh comments: “Created . . . specifically to secure financial support, the (Friends) groups observed in our sample tended to fall apart for lack of an incentive after their single objective had been accomplished.”
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In this connection we cannot help but think of Noah Webster's comment on the saying: "It will do for the present," which, according to Webster "does as much mischief in society as rum or pestilence." Considering all the effort and work which goes into assembling a group of Friends, it seems extremely wasteful to let an established organization dissolve because we think "it will do for the present."

The A.L.A. Friends Committee has, so far, chosen to survey Friends organizations in two separate groupings: 1) college and university libraries, and 2) public libraries. The ideology behind the formation of such societies is the same. The library needs support from outside sources, to be given without demanding or assuming the right to interfere with the administration of the institution.

Generally speaking, university libraries aim primarily to improve their collections. They want material which will give strength and distinction to the institution, and will draw teachers, scholars, and students to the campus. Once a Friends group has been established in connection with a college or university library, the faculty usually supports it with a good deal of enthusiasm, often stimulating gifts of book collections in a special field of learning.

Public libraries naturally tend more towards the improvement of facilities and the acquisition of additional popular reading materials. With certain notable exceptions, the maintenance of rare books and special collections is usually not regarded as part of the function of the average public library. However, in the last few years a distinctive change in policy has become noticeable. Although the servicing of popular collections is still regarded as the primary function, the value of research and source materials is being recognized increasingly by the community and the library administration. More and more people have had the benefit of higher education and they desire to continue their research and reading habits even after leaving the campus. Since the budgets of public libraries are not set up to allow for costly out-of-print and valuable research and reference collections, it is only natural that the administration strives to find additional means of revenue to satisfy new demands which are coming from a sizable portion of the library's patrons. Besides, these readers usually consist of people holding influential positions in the community and they can stimulate support of the library, which they often do when they realize that their wishes are given consideration.

In many of the large public libraries rare books and special collections have originated from gifts of individual donors. The generous
gifts of Astor and Lenox, for instance, after their consolidation in 1895, became the basis for the internationally known and respected reference collections of the New York Public Library. These collections contributed greatly to the prestige of the library, and once their adequate maintenance and usefulness were recognized by the people, other gifts of collections and endowments, like the Spencer, the Berg, and the Arents collections followed, thus making the New York Public Library one of the greatest research and rare book collections in the country. To this day these reference collections remain without tax support and they rely on the income derived from their Associates. This demonstrates beyond doubt that once the usefulness of rare books and special collections to a given library is established and proven, other benefactors follow suit in selecting the same institution as the favored repository for their own treasures.

Yet, when scanning the list of Accomplishments of Friends of Public Libraries in the PLD Reporter 8 (remembering that Friends of Public Libraries outnumber Friends’ groups of colleges and universities three to one), we notice with amazement and consternation that the term “rare books” only occurs one single time (Detroit Public Library) among 113 groups reporting. Special collections are mentioned only twice, once in the case of a group devoted entirely to supporting a Music Division (Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh), and another time in Friends promoting a California Room—a reference collection of California (Oakland, California Public Library). When examining a chart table of “Original Purpose”13 we find that only six of the libraries reporting try to stimulate gifts, endowments, etc. Of course, we must remember that the survey was conducted five years ago, and we hope and trust that by this time the Friends of Public Libraries include gifts, rare books, and special collections in their statements of purpose.

L. B. Wright, director of the Folger Shakespeare Library, recalled in a talk before the Friends of the University of North Carolina Library in 1949 14 the words of the Reverend Samuel Osgood of New York “who gloomily remarked in 1853 that not a single library in America ‘affords the requisite means for the thorough study of any one topic of recondite learning, even if of practical science. Any scholar who tries to investigate any ancient or historical subject will find, to his regret, that no library in the country has a plummet that can sound its depths.’ Even the national library—the Library of Congress—though it had received one of Thomas Jefferson’s collections as
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a nucleus, for generations thereafter did not become an adequate re-
search library." We have come a long way since the times of Reverend
Sam Osgood. Public libraries everywhere in the United States are
recognizing their responsibility to research and scholarship and are
doing their very best to further this cause.

The question is often asked whether smaller institutions should
house and acquire unique, rare, and specialized material. There are
at least three good reasons justifying the establishment of such collec-
tions. Common to all libraries should be the desire to gather material
depicting the history and the art of the book. Such a collection will
make the library patron aware of the tremendous impact of the in-
vention of printing, without which none of the books on the shelves
would be available. A local history collection, including books, manu-
scripts and related materials, will enhance the importance of any
library. The local newspaper, civic organizations, and research scholars
will use historical material and most likely will add their own collec-
tions to the library’s holdings. In addition, collections pertaining to
the history of local industry are always useful, never out of place.
Most of the time this industry will gladly support and contribute to
the collection.

Just as important as proving to the community the usefulness of
rare books, of historical material and special collections, is the devo-
tion and enthusiasm for such material on the part of the library staff.
Without it we cannot expect much success. Love for books is not
quite sufficient, however. Some preparation is needed. Knowledge of
the history of the book and book collecting, of processing and archival
practices, book buying, etc., are essential and important in trying to
convince a prospective benefactor that his books will be useful and
properly placed and cared for. The library assumes a grave responsi-
bility towards donor and community in accepting valuable rare book
and research materials. If the library administration cannot see its
way to provide the means for suitable processing and maintenance
of these donations, the donor might be willing to assume this responsi-
bility by providing the necessary funds. This is a difficult task to ac-
complish, but it has been done successfully.

The first duty of the librarian is to convince the governing body
of his institution not only of the research and public relations value
of including rare books and special collections in his program, but
also of the responsibilities and costs connected with accepting such
donations. Once the decision is made, it is most helpful to show the
prospective donors at least the beginning of a well maintained special collection. There is no library, large or small, which cannot find among its holdings a certain number of books which deserve to be exhibited or shelved in a separate place. There are always some modern press books, illustrated books, art books, first editions, association copies, and the like, which can be brought together to form the nucleus of a rare book collection.

Faculty members of colleges and universities are known to have donated their private libraries to their institutions. We hardly ever hear that patrons of public libraries, who are using the collections for years, leave their private collections to these institutions. There is, however, the chance that they would do so if their attention were drawn to instances of special collections having been donated to the library by other individuals. A well organized rare book collection in suitable surroundings, accompanied by an enthusiastic and well informed staff is one of the greatest assets in stimulating donations. The stage must be properly set and there is no reason why a Friends group could not be organized for the purpose of raising the necessary funds.

Most of the formalities needed for organizing a Friends group are described in previously cited publications. The librarian has to get the consent of his governing body, and if he initiates the project, has to have a limited amount of money to provide for mailing invitations to the first meeting, for refreshments, and literature to be distributed, explaining the purpose of the new organization. The Free Library of Philadelphia, in its first report to the Friends states that "the Board of Trustees . . . approved the formation of a Friends group . . . (and) authorized a grant of $2,000 and approved a committee. Through the gracious aid of many civic-minded organizations, a very effective mailing list was compiled." 15

The question arises as to the persons who should be asked to participate in a first meeting. Most publications suggest the following: members of literary clubs, book clubs, civic clubs, church clubs, women's clubs (American Association of University Women), industrial organizations, and individuals such as lawyers (they will be helpful in formulating the constitution), authors, publishers, teachers, physicians, editors of newspapers, industrialists, and last, but not least, book collectors and dealers. In a university community, alumni and faculty would be the first to be approached. The founding of the Friends of the Princeton University Library is described in an informative and amusing paper by Willard Thorp 18 who questioned
the effectiveness of the organizational dinner meeting held in New York in a swank restaurant, attended by a select group of well-to-do alumni. He soon learned, that contrary to his impression, such extravagant beginnings do bear fruit.

It is advisable to stress during the very first meeting the fact that it is and remains the role of the library administration to formulate policies, and the role of the Friends to interpret these policies and aid in their successful execution. The purpose of the organization should be presented and discussed at the first meeting and the following examples may help to outline the aims of existing groups:

1) To provide a medium for bringing together all people interested in books and the development of resources for the community. To encourage gifts of private libraries, individual books, and funds or bequests for the purchase of books. To assemble, through the collection of annual membership dues, a fund for the acquisition of rare, fine, or unique materials which otherwise could not be made available to the people of the community (Friends of the Detroit Public Library).

2) To assist all agencies of the library, and to acquire desirable items for its special collections which it could not otherwise obtain—and to provide various occasions, such as lectures, authors’ teas, receptions, and exhibit previews, at which all those who enjoy books could meet and enjoy mutual interests (Friends of the Free Library of Philadelphia).

3) To encourage and draw together all organized groups interested in library development and the preservation of archives (Friends of Kentucky Libraries).

4) To stimulate and unite effort so that the library may receive desirable collections and material not otherwise available and to acquaint the taxpayer with the problems of library administration (Friends of the Denver Public Library).

5) To assume the responsibility of acquainting its members with the resources and needs of the university library and to create from dues income, a fund for the purchase of those materials most likely to enhance the lasting value of the library (Friends of the Johns Hopkins University Library).

6) To promote expansion in library resources (Syracuse University Library Associates).

7) The Friends are interested in books—and in the growing strength of the Library (Friends of the Princeton Library).

8) Maintain an organization of persons interested in books, to assist in bringing to the library funds for special needs beyond the command of the library budget, to encourage gifts of books and manuscripts, and to cooperate with the librarian and the library advisory board in the development of resources of the library.
under the direction of the library committee of the Board of Trustees (The Associated Friends of the Library of Rutgers University).

Once the constitution is drawn up—it can be very simple and examples can be found in the Public Library Edition of *Friends of the Library Groups* or by writing to any Friends organization or the A.L.A. Committee on Friends—membership dues should be determined. In most cases there are four different categories of dues, including individual, industrial, institutional, life memberships, etc. Individual membership dues range from $1.00 to $10.00. In some (few) cases no membership dues are required, but contributions are welcomed. One library asks for a book a year which entitles individuals to membership, in some libraries donors automatically become members of the Friends group for the current year.

The possible benefits which the library can derive from an active Friends organization are practically unlimited. However, work has to be done, and it is best divided about equally between the library staff and the members of the organization. Donors, individual and corporate, ask something in return for their work, their gifts, and their good will. It is well known that Andrew Carnegie, the greatest friend of libraries ever to have lived, established during his lifetime a very large number of libraries (2,505, to be exact). His method was to build and equip libraries on the condition that the local authority provides the site and maintenance. He wanted to be sure of the lasting interest of the community.

It is a wise move on the part of the library administration to acquaint the members of the Friends’ organization by means of tours, lectures, and publications of the resources and services of the institution. The scope of the rare book and special collections can be printed and distributed to members, independent donors, and to general users. Such an example can be found in a broadside issued by the Lena R. Arents Rare Book Room of the Syracuse University Library, entitled: “Collecting Canons.” It is important to convince the donors of special collections that the library will work on their steady growth, and if the donor is living, it is a good idea to notify him of books available in the market which will add to the importance of the collection. An active interest in his gift is thus established, and many a time he will even foot the bill for the desired material.

A list of desiderata published separately or included in a Friends or library publication, shows the wish to enlarge and better the collections and fill the gaps. Very often it brings results. Sometimes
money is received to pay for a particular item on the list, other times a particular item might be in the possession of one of the members, and consequently finds its way to the library shelves. The Princeton University Library from time to time publishes a pamphlet entitled “Needs, Needs.” Included in the Report to the Friends of the Free Library of Philadelphia is a list of titles “urgently needed by the Library.” The librarian in charge or the curator should keep in close contact with rare and antiquarian book dealers, not only in his own locality, but in all of the United States and abroad. These people make it their business to study the library’s collections and desiderata and bring to the attention of the curator material which can be purchased or suggested for purchase to Friends or individual donors. In many cases one of the committees established by a Friends organization deals with the acquisition of books. In isolated instances, the Friends even have a bibliography committee to study library resources.

There are many ways to show appreciation for gifts. Proper acknowledgment is a necessity and one of the most effective ways to secure further donations. Whether a gift is large or small in value or importance, the first step is to acknowledge receipt and express the thanks of the institution. A personal letter by the librarian or the person in charge of the department receiving the gift is always effective. A form letter may be used, depending on the value of the material. The tribute to the donor can be as large or as small as his gift. In some cases a wing has been added to a library or a separate building constructed to pay tribute to the benefactor. Rooms housing the collections have been named in honor of the donor. Sometimes the original library room of the donor is reproduced to perpetuate the collection in its original environment. A section of the rare book room or even a shelf, can bear a plaque with the donor’s name. Special bookplates are sometimes designed, bearing the name of the donor.

Some Friends organizations design and print their own bookplates, others depend on the library for providing suitable plates or labels. Individual names of donors are either printed or typed on a special bookplate on which space is left for the donor’s name. In one instance the donors are asked to sign their own names at the occasion of a special tea given once a year for this purpose.

Most Friends groups and libraries provide facilities for accepting donations in memory or honor of a friend or relative. In case funds for the purchase of books are received, the wishes of the donor as to the books most appropriately memorializing the person to whom he
wishes to pay tribute are of course respected. Suggestions for suitable material are submitted. Special bookplates designed to contain the names of the memorialized person and the donor are put into the book and the family of the deceased or the person to be honored is notified of the gift. Many libraries and Friends have so successfully publicized memorial gifts, that families announce their preference for donations to the library in local newspapers. One library has gone so far as to advocate this practice by distributing literature to funeral homes. Personally, this author finds this slightly morbid.

Descriptions of gifts in the Friends or library's publications, presented in a scholarly fashion, are a good way to express appreciation for a gift.

Exhibits of special gifts, accompanied by a catalog if possible (the donor might even pay for the catalog), are another sign of recognizing the importance of a gift. Many libraries exhibit gifts of the Friends and of individual donors once a year, the opening of the exhibit to coincide with the annual meeting of the Friends Organization or at the occasion of a lecture or tea.

Local newspapers are informed of important donations and sometimes a well publicized ceremony celebrating the receipt of a gift by the library, is a much appreciated gesture.

A list of donors and gifts should be published in the annual report and/or in a section of a bulletin or magazine.

Finally the donor should be informed—if he is not aware of it already—that his contribution to an educational institution in the form of money or books, is income tax deductible according to federal laws. A former president of the Friends of the Detroit Public Library, Inc. has explained and described most clearly the application of this law in a brochure. A booklet published by the Dartmouth College entitled *Philanthropic Estate Planning* may also be consulted to advantage. Some libraries assume the responsibility of appraising collections or individual books for income tax deduction purposes, others refer the donors to professional appraisers (sometimes three different ones at a time). They have to be paid for their experienced services by the donor or the library, of course. A statement as to the legality of income tax deductions should appear in the literature distributed to members of the Friends.

Although all libraries are most grateful for donations, some unreasonable requests are encountered to which the library can not and should not submit. Some collectors are known to have "peddled"
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gifts to several libraries, trying to force the highest possible appraisal. A request to appraise books for an unreasonably high amount should be denied, even at the risk that the gift is lost to the institution. The donor may insist that his collection of books be kept together in one place, although the books would be much more useful if distributed according to their subjects. An intelligent explanation is usually all that is required to change the donor's mind in such cases. We also receive requests to include materials in the rare book collection which do not fit its scope or are otherwise not worthy of inclusion. At all times we should at least try to receive the gifts with "no strings attached." These are, of course, the most desirable ones. They can even be traded or sold, wholly or in part, for material more valuable in strengthening the existing collections. And this is another time when the curator's personal acquaintance with antiquarian and rare book dealers comes in most handy.

Publications contribute greatly to the effectiveness of a Friends' organization. Many Friends publish a bulletin or magazine at more or less regular intervals. These publications are usually paid for from membership dues. Papers accepted for inclusion are mostly the work of the staff, of faculty members, less frequently of members of the organization, or transcripts of lectures delivered to the membership. In checking about a dozen different Friends' publications it was determined that they contain the following information: articles of bibliographic interest, papers on book collecting, descriptions of library resources; lists of acquisitions with separate, detailed descriptions of the most important gifts; lists of desiderata; library news; lists of members or new members; membership news; lists of donors; and the annual report of the organization.

Some societies publish their annual report separately, or publish only an annual report. Some print in booklet form separate lectures delivered to the membership, some issue keepsakes of typographic interest as the occasion arises. Many libraries make their own publications available to the Friends' membership, including the annual report of the librarian. Promotional material is another project for a publications committee, and so are membership blanks and cards and announcements of coming events and lectures.

Lectures are another important activity sponsored by Friends organizations, often in cooperation with the library. The programs may include speeches of bibliographic and book collecting interest, papers by famous authors or recitations by noted poets, or talks by staff mem-
bers describing and publicizing the resources of the library or reviewing current books. Thus the Friends provide a center of bibliophilic interest and function as a distinctive cultural stimulant in the community.

In closing it seems apt to quote A. E. Nealy who discusses the library in an issue of the Bulletin of Educational Philanthropy: “Any non-profit organization such as a college or a library with a public relations policy that does not invite gifts, seldom receives any. Nor do its users have the pride and interest therein that philanthropic participation engenders. . . . The techniques of philanthropic approach in the case of libraries must necessarily be more innocuous than appeals on behalf of churches, . . . health organizations, etc. But the fact that libraries are entitled to be considered as beneficiaries of philanthropy is amply proved by the unsolicited gifts and bequests that come their way. The point we make here is that, for every one such that becomes an actuality, there are probably many more that never materialize due to lack of public relations policies along philanthropic lines.”

Wise and tactful public relations policies used by the library administration, alone or in cooperation with the Friends organization in approaching prospective donors, bring often desired, sometimes even unexpected results.

The cunning seldom gain their ends,
The wise are never without friends.

The Fox and the Hen

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Friends of the Library and Other Benefactors and Donors

10. Thompson, op. cit.
20. Among Friends, Friends of the Detroit Public Library; Bookmark, Friends of the University of North Carolina; Columbia Library Columns, Friends of Columbia University Library; Courier, Syracuse University Library Associates; Ex Libris, Friends of Johns Hopkins University; The Journal of Rutgers University Library; Library Notes, Friends of the Haverhill Public Library; Princeton University Library Chronicle, Friends of the Princeton Library; The Record, Friends of the Library of Washington State University; and others.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

Book Appraisals

JOHN S. KEBABIAN

The question of book appraisals has long been recognized as one which presents a thorny aspect to both the librarian and the book dealer. Problems of evaluating single books or collections of books have arisen more and more frequently in recent years, and in dealing with them most librarians are quite aware that their professional training and experience has given them little background for confidently and conscientiously giving an opinion. Yet the fact remains that the book owner, from the little old lady with the little old book, "with the S's printed like F's," to the prospective donor with an important research collection, does need guidance; that, if guidance is not given, it may result in the loss of a collection to a library, or lead to the ignorant destruction of a rare book or unique document.

The most frequent seeker after an appraisal is certainly the owner of one or a few old books, generally of the eighteenth or nineteenth century, who will assure you that they are "very old" and have "come down in the family." Such book owners turn up at libraries or book dealers, especially after a sensational price for some great rarity has been reported in the newspapers, in the hope that their book, too, might have some commercial value. The safest way of dealing with such requests is for the librarian to refer them to the volumes of American Book Prices Current and Book Auction Records, explaining to the owner that these books give records of prices actually realized in the book market.

If the librarian wishes to proceed further, he could make available a list of book dealers, such as the one published by the Antiquarian Booksellers Association of America, 3 West 46th Street, New York 36, New York, and advise the owner to correspond with a dealer. The A.B.A.A. list gives special fields of interest of the various dealers, and this may assist the owner in his selecting someone to consult. Single

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copies of *Books and Values* are sent free to libraries, and a minimum charge is made for quantity orders.

If the regulations of a library permit, it would be helpful to all concerned that the owner be given frank enlightenment when the book he has is obviously of little or no commercial value. A small amount of research into editions of the Bible, for instance, will save time for the owner, for the librarian, and very likely for other librarians or book dealers, if one can say with some confidence that the edition put before him is worthless. Similarly, the time spent for some staff member to familiarize himself with the facsimile editions of old newspapers, with the more common "standard sets," periodicals, and textbooks, will repay itself over and over in time saved.

An entirely different problem arises when there is a donation to a library of books or manuscripts which apparently have value in the book market. The tax laws of the United States exempt from taxation any sum, up to 20 per cent of net income, which is given to an educational foundation or institution not privately owned. When books or manuscripts are given, their money equivalent as of the date of the gift is therefore exempt, and this means that someone who has knowledge of market values must supply a statement to the donor stating this value.

In these cases the appraiser must have another qualification (besides a knowledge of values)—he must be impartial; he must have no interest in the valuation which results from his examination and research. Can the librarian, who presumably will be adding these books to the collections of his institution, claim that he is a disinterested party? This is a question which has been much discussed recently, and which needs some clarification.

In favor of the librarian-appraiser, it may be said that he can claim impartiality in that he is not acquiring the books or manuscripts in question for himself but for his institution; that bringing in an appraiser would often be time-consuming and disproportionately expensive especially when no local talent is available; and that, in many specialized fields, it would be difficult to secure a dealer or professional appraiser at all who could perform the work competently.

Those who do not approve of the librarian acting as appraiser claim that there is a conflict of interest between his loyalty to the institution of which he is (or should be) an important and influential member, and his duty to do justice to the claims of the income tax collector; that it would be difficult if not impossible for him to forget
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the prestige and well-being of his institution, or not to feel some
gratitude towards the donor who is enriching the collections he ad-
ministers.

A study which would consider the legal and ethical aspects of this
problem, and which would be sponsored by somebody who would
command the respectful attention of the professional librarian, is cer-
tainly needed at present. (A committee of the Rare Books Section of
the Association of College and Research Libraries is studying the
question at present, and is expected to report their findings and recom-
mendations at the pre-convention meeting next July at Oberlin.) The
question is not a trivial one; under the present tax laws, and in a
time when the values of books and manuscripts are steadily rising, a
large sum of money may be involved in a single gift, and the total of
such gifts may run to millions of dollars annually.

The librarian-appraiser is in a stronger ethical position, of course,
when his valuation applies to books or manuscripts which have been
given to his library before any valuation has been made, and is in a
correspondingly weaker position when the gift is made only after a
valuation has been made and accepted as satisfactory by the owner,
who, of course, generally wishes to have as high a deduction as can
be obtained.

If the librarian does not wish to "do it himself," where can he obtain
the services of an appraiser who will make a competent and conscien-
tious evaluation? Libraries in many sections of the United States
have large research collections, which certainly will welcome acquisi-
tions by gift, but have no bookseller at hand who can deal with such
gift appraisals. In the case of a collection which obviously has great
value, it is best for the materials to be listed and evaluated by a dealer,
even if this involves some expense. The cost of such appraisal is
normally only a very small fraction of the value, and should be will-
ingly paid. In the case of smaller collections or single volumes, a
dealer may be willing to give a value by correspondence, though for
him to do this the books must be described carefully. Such a course
of action will avoid the possibility of the librarian becoming involved
in a dispute with the tax bureau, and will save him considerable time.
The tax deduction appraisal is, of course, for the benefit of the donor,
and in many cases will be attended to by him without the library
being involved at all.

Besides the instances of valuation for income tax deductions, ap-
praisals have to be made also for insurance and for estates of de-
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ceased persons. Book collections, whether privately, publicly or institutionally owned, generally have insurance coverage for fire and other losses, and it is sometimes a requirement, and always a good practice, for the collection to be appraised. Without such an appraisal the owner is very much in the dark as to how much insurance he should buy, and may even have difficulties in establishing his loss if it does occur.

Valuations for estates are normally made only if the collection is of substantial value. Even in smaller estates, however, it can be very helpful to the heirs to know whether the collection is or is not of some value, though there is little or no tax involved. Insurance and estate valuations are generally made by dealers. In the book trade, appraisals are looked upon as an extra service or accommodation to customers, as there is little profit in them considering the amount of time which they take. Some dealers prefer not to do them at all. A library which often receives gifts and which supplies appraisals at the request of the donor would do well to make an arrangement with some one dealer to whom they could be regularly referred.

In a publication devoted to "trends" it would not be inappropriate to gaze into the crystal ball and attempt to descry the future in its cloudy depths. So far as this writer can see, the operation of the tax laws will continue the need for appraisals in an even more acute form. A sort of "feedback" situation seems to have developed and promises to continue, for as the values of books and manuscripts keep on rising, so the owner (especially the owner with a large income) will continue to find it almost necessary to give his books away rather than sell them; as the books are removed from the book market, so the price of other copies will continue to rise. And so on. The collector will fume at how expensive books have become, but will speak softly of how his collection has doubled, tripled, quadrupled in value.

As the decisions and rulings come from the legislatures and the tax courts, the regulations concerning donations and bequests become more and more complicated, and knowledge of them becomes more and more the province of the lawyer and accountant. It would be appropriate, however, for a rare book librarian to familiarize himself with the general outlines of such regulations so that he can intelligently discuss them with a prospective donor. The Friends of the Detroit Public Library have, in fact, prepared and distributed a little brochure outlining the advantages of various methods of making gifts to the Library.
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Several years ago, a prominent rare book librarian sadly observed that “there doesn't seem to be anything any more, from womb to tomb, that doesn't have a tax 'angle'.” This situation certainly will continue, and perhaps become more acute. American libraries have long been an eighth wonder of the world for their efficient cataloging and for their speedy service; it will not be long before the richness of their collections of rare books will add yet another wonder to the list.
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"THE COMMERCIAL ELEMENTS in book-collecting are collectors, dealers and institutional libraries (auction houses are merely a mechanical convenience)." Thus the Sandars Reader in Bibliography in the University of Cambridge in the year 1947, with that propensity to sweeping generalization which is apt to beset the layman temporarily entrusted with an academic pulpit. I was taken to task, I remember, for this disparaging reference to the sale-room by Charles des Graz of Sotheby's, one of the ablest men even to adorn his profession. I think he thought I was biased by twenty years in the rare book business. But today, after five years' experience on the other side of the rostrum, I am unrepentant.

Booksellers can, and some do, influence both taste and technique in book-collecting: actively by what they buy and try to sell, passively by what they decide (rightly or wrongly) that their customers will have no use for. Book buyers, whether librarians or private collectors, can, and many do, influence the rare book trade: actively by what they buy and what they ask for, passively by what they do not. The auctioneer can have very little effective influence on either party, for he is only the agent for an owner of a book or a collection of books which that owner wishes to sell and which the auction house provides the opportunity for someone else to buy.

At one end of this operation, of course, a good auction house will give of its best in advice to the owner as to whether this is a good moment to sell this particular material; for it is the auctioneer's business to be keenly aware of the trends of taste (and of fashion) as they are, or may be expected to be, expressed in terms of price under the hammer. Today, to take some obvious examples, he could reassure an owner about the market for early scientific books, color-plate flower and bird books, Western Americana, collections of publishers'...
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correspondence, modern literary manuscripts, writing-books, first editions of the metaphysical poets, and presentation copies of John Betjeman’s works. On the other hand he would advise holding (if the owner or estate can wait) first editions of Fielding or Shelley, Dickens or Thackeray or Meredith, Tennyson or Edwin Arlington Robinson, in the hope that these authors will one day return to bibliophilic favor. He will at all times have to tell owners of sets of Stillingfleet’s Sermons, collected editions of Bulwer Lytton, and Bibles “almost a hundred years old,” that the case is hopeless.

At the other end of the operation he will engage in the owner’s interest his catalogers’ best abilities (consistent with that race against time which is the occupational disease of auction houses) in the description of properties consigned; the experienced machinery of his organization in promoting their sale; and his own skill on the rostrum in getting the best price possible. In the interest of prospective bidders, on whose confidence and good will both he and his clients ultimately depend, he will observe (in London at any rate) a studied sobriety in description and promotion, and standards of precision and of scrupulous care in attribution much beyond his strictly limited legal warranty. Besides general advice to an owner, he can sometimes, when making a selection from a library for sale, pick out deliberately a few dark horses which he believes might do well if given their heads on a fashionable course. And beyond expressing his opinion to prospective buyers by means of the degree of prominence or emphasis given to one lot in the catalog over another, he can sometimes, by bringing a special degree of scholarship or authority to bear on his cataloging in some particular category, encourage or even stimulate a trend in that direction. For example, the notable renaissance in the department of fine bindings, which owes much indeed to the work of E. Ph. Goldschmidt, J. B. Oldham, Ernst Kyriss, L. M. Michon and H. M. Nixon, owes much also to the expertise of the Hobsons, père et fils, at Sotheby’s. Nevertheless, the influence which an auction house can deliberately exert on the movements of taste or of the market is severely limited by the impartial character of its function.

Yet, beyond the fact that “a mere mechanical convenience” is still a convenience, the auction room performs two important and valuable services to the bibliophile community: a community of which institutional libraries and their librarians are becoming every year a more powerful component. It provides a continuous barometer of prices—or, if you prefer, a continuous fever-chart of bibliomania. It also pro-
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vides something which professional librarians perhaps relish less than collectors and dealers: color, romance, and excitement; surprises, upsets and disappointments; landmarks, records and historic occasions. "People say that life is the thing," wrote my old friend Logan Pearsall Smith, "but I prefer reading"; and Academe inclines to agree with him. On the other hand another old friend, Dean Acheson, once observed (in a rather different context, it is true) that "Tension is bad for people with weak nerves, but very little is accomplished without it." It is a prime function of the auction room to generate tension, to add spice to life.

I know this factor in bibliophil~ is not measurable by the Dewey system. I realize that an institutional librarian who is seen with his tongue hanging out is likely to get it officially cut off. The Library of Congress catalog card no doubt has a slot for provenance; but it cannot, in recording that this is "the Coningsby-Locksley Hall-Hentzau-Casamassima-D’Urberville copy" of the Aldine Polifilo on vellum, in richly gilt morocco by Claude de Pioques, recapture the smell of excitement at the climax of the D’Urberville sale, when G-lad-schm-dt, acting for the P--rp-nt M-rg-n Library, outbid R-se-h,ch, who was thought to have gone far beyond the commission entrusted to him by Y-le. It ought, I think, to be mandatory upon all institutional libraries to send every member of the staff of their accessions division to a major auction sale (by which of course I mean preferably a sale at Sotheby’s) at least once a year.

Since the junior member of that staff may not be entirely clear how a book auction works, he will be well advised, before he starts off, to do what ought by now to be routine in any question about book-collecting: viz. look under “Auctions" in that indispensable compendium, ABC for Book-Collectors. But in case some colleague has borrowed his own copy, I have secured permission to quote the entry here. (The text is that of the third, revised, edition.)

(1) The description of books, MSS., fine bindings, etc., in sale catalogues varies widely in fullness, precision and authority. Excluding the sometimes lavish productions of Continental houses, the most consistently dressy catalogues have of late years been those of the Parke-Bernet Galleries in New York, which are designed to appeal as much (or more) to private buyers as to the trade. More reserved in style, but seldom falling short of a conscientious standard of precision, are those of Sotheby’s, the largest book-auction house in London. Hodgson’s are the only auctioneers in London dealing exclusively
in books and cognate material, whereas Christies' book sales are a
minor department of the firm's business. The catalogues of the pro-
vincial auctioneers, who are normally selling books as part of a mixed
property, are often notably uninformative, especially as to the contents
of bundled lots; and although legal warranty for the accuracy of de-
scriptions of the lots offered is carefully restricted throughout the
auction business as a whole, it is naturally a livelier issue in sales for
which the catalogue makes no pretence to EXPERTNESS. Yet the collector
who contemplates bidding at an auction without professional advice
would do well first to ponder the conditions of sale printed in every
auction catalogue, which vary from firm to firm, and sometimes from
sale to sale by the same firm; and then to remember that the return
of any lot not actually incomplete or seriously misdescribed will be
a matter of grace, not of right.

The better auction houses, of course, take care to describe their
offerings accurately, since 'returns' are just as much of a nuisance to
them as to the buyer. Despite occasional lapses, their cataloguers do
their best to keep abreast of bibliographical research. And the annota-
tion of important lots is often of a thoroughly scholarly character . . .
Indeed, catalogues of famous libraries sold at auction . . . have taken
their place as indispensable reference books on the shelves, not only of
booksellers and collectors, but also of scholars and librarians.

(2) Yet bidding at auction—any auction—is subject to many haz-
ards besides the one well known in old wives' tales: that of the inno-
cent bystander who nods his head without thinking and has a white
elephant knocked down to him. This risk, if no other, can be avoided
by entrusting one's bid to the auctioneer, who will execute it without
commission, but also, of course, without assuming any additional war-
ranty or exercising any such special discretion as is implicit in the
employment of an agent.

There is the psychological risk: that one may be carried away by
competitive fever. There is the economic fallacy: that any book bought
at auction must be a bargain—a fallacy based on the supposition that
all prices at auction sales are as it were wholesale, and that by buying
in the rooms one cuts out the middleman (i.e. the bookseller). There
is the risk of failure to realise that, while a bookseller guarantees his
offerings, the rule in the auction room is caveat emptor. For once the
hammer has fallen, the lot is yours; and if you find, when you get
your books home, that one has been re-cased, another is not the first
issue, while a third is not as fine a copy as you had imagined, you
will remember too late that the onus of satisfying yourself on these
points has throughout been understood to be yours and not the au-
tioneer's.

Veteran collectors can, and sometimes do, bid for themselves with-
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out burning their fingers. They have examined their lots with care, they know what each book is worth (and also what they may have to pay, which is often not at all the same thing), and they are ready to pit their knowledge and sale-room tactics against those of the booksellers. Perhaps they simply enjoy an exhilarating session in the rooms. But they are still in a small minority; for most experienced collectors have concluded that they are more likely to get the lots they want, and get them at reasonable prices, if they entrust their bids to a chosen bookseller. Many collectors and institutional librarians employ a regular agent for their auction business in each city. If not, in selecting their man for a particular bid they will probably have regard not only to his knowledge and judgment, but also (especially in the more specialised fields) to the advantage of eliminating a likely competitor by making him their agent.

The normal commission charged by booksellers for executing bids at auction is ten per cent, which may seem expensive for a well-known and bibliographically uncomplicated book of high but stable market value—one, that is, which does not involve much expert examination or much expert estimation of price. But over a series of transactions ‘on commission,’ the bookseller will probably engage a great deal more professional skill and spend a great deal more time in his customer’s interest than is adequately repaid by his ten per cent. This of course is payable only on successful bids; yet for the lots on which he is outbid he will have provided equally full service—in advice as to the probable price, in collation and appraisal of the material, in attendance (often with wearisome waiting between lots) at the sale and in the highly skilled business of the actual bidding.

The novice collector does well to recognise that in a bookshop there is a strong bond of common interest across the counter, but that in the sale-room every man’s hand (except the auctioneer’s) is against him. If he is a man of spirit, he may relish the encounter; hoping to beat the professionals at their own game and prepared to take a few knocks in the process. Yet if he is a man of sense, he will only do so after careful reconnaissance, and then with his eyes wide open.

(3) Prices in the auction room, as listed in the annual records, can be misleading unless they are carefully interpreted. For a reasonably common book—one, that is, of which a copy or two turns up at auction every year—the records provide a general idea of the level or trend of prices; and when, as often, these seem to fluctuate wildly, it must be remembered that one copy may have been in brilliant condition and the next one a cripple—a crucial difference which the abbreviated style of these records cannot be expected to make clear. For rarer books the occasional entries will, of course, provide some idea of the ruling price; but the more infrequent they are, the greater
the need to consider the usually invisible factors—condition (as always); but also, was this an important sale, when prices tend to be high? Or did the copy come up at the fag end of a miscellaneous one, when even booksellers tend to be weary and uninterested? Were there perhaps two keen collectors after the same lot, and therefore two exceptionally high commissions given? Or was this, by contrast, the purchase of a prudent bookseller buying for stock? Was there some point about the book, unmentioned in the sale catalogues (the source of the entry), which would account by its presence for a high price or by its absence for a low one? It is also, of course, necessary to take into account the date when the price was reached. For example, prices were very high in certain categories (e.g. eighteenth century literature, the Romantics, modern first editions) during the 1920's. Prices across the board were low during the early and middle 1930's. Prices in many departments have risen steadily, in some sharply (e.g. science and medicine, colour-plate bird and flower books, modern literary manuscripts and correspondence) during the past 10 or 15 years. Moreover, an American considering a price record in sterling does well to remember that the dollar rate fluctuated from time to time in the decades before the pound was devalued (in 1949) to its present figure of $2.80.

In short, the auction records have to be used with caution even for their main purpose, which is to give prices. As for the bibliographical information provided, at least by the two English series, it should be treated with even greater caution; for it is abbreviated (not always intelligibly) from notes in the auctioneers’ catalogues, which are themselves drawn from all sorts of sources—and have occasionally been known to include the happy excursions into bibliographical theory and the optimistic estimates of rarity which some collectors pencil on the flyleaves of their favourite books. Even the most responsible auctioneers, it will be recalled, are very careful to limit their assumption of warranty; and their cataloguers, however expert, are almost always working against time.

(4) In conclusion, a few miscellaneous notes. The ownership of substantial or important properties sold at auction is usually disclosed. But the majority of sales in the principal London book-auction rooms are made up of various properties, and a good many of these are apt to be anonymous. This cloaking of ownership, which conceals a book’s immediate provenance, is sometimes due to the modesty of the consignor (e.g. ‘The Property of a Nobleman Resident Abroad’, ‘The Property of a Lady’), or the disinclination of a well-known collector to be identified with the books he is discarding. More often it is simply that the property is not large enough, nor the owner’s name important enough, to justify a separate entry.
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A proportion of these anonymous properties, however, will come from some bookseller's stock: either because he has bought a library containing a mass of books outside his field; or because he has had certain books in stock for a long time and is tired of offering them unsuccessfully; or finally because he judges that some particular book will fetch a better price at auction than he could get for it in his shop. (He may wish to reach a wider public than his own catalogue list; or he may have his eye on a collector who prefers buying at auction to buying from a bookseller.)

Then it must be realised that (in England) the vendor may have put a reserve on a lot, below which he is unwilling that it should be sold. The reserve figure has to be agreed with the auctioneer, who will treat it like any other bid committed to him by a would-be buyer and will bid from the rostrum. (It is illegal to put a reserve on a lot and then bid it up oneself or employ an agent to do so.) Lots which fail to reach the reserve and are knocked down to the owner (always under some assumed name) are said to be bought in; and the owner-purchaser will pay the auctioneer's commission, usually on a reduced scale. The last unsuccessful bidder on a lot at auction is known as the under-bidder or the runner-up.

Since it may be a year or two before my recommendation for sending accessions divisions staff members to auction sales is adopted by the American Library Association, and since indeed even Canarsie University cannot be expected to be shooting at pedigreed copies of aristocratic incunabula every day, it behoves us to consider things as they are, and at a more mundane level. I shall assume that the libraries in which my readers are employed subscribe to the catalogs of at least the principal book auction houses of the United States and of Europe. I shall assume that these are scanned on receipt, and the library's desiderata marked; and since run-of-the-mill second hand books will not normally be sought by a library in the auction room, I shall further assume that we are thinking of items of some consequence and perhaps of some rarity. Thus far, auction catalogs are being treated exactly like booksellers' catalogs coming into the library. But in respect of the latter the question then to be decided by the competent authority—and the cannier booksellers know to a dollar where, in any important university library, the accessions chief's, and where the librarian's, discretionary powers end, entailing reference to some board or committee—the question is simply whether this copy is a sensible buy at this marked price (less, presumably, that library discount).
With an auction catalog it is otherwise. The book or manuscript or map or broadside or autograph letter in question may be described with equal precision, even if, in London at any rate, with less color. But the item cannot be ordered on approval, and the price will not be known till the hammer falls. If, then, it has been decided that the library should go after it, how is the amount of the bid to be fixed, and how is the bidding to be handled? On the answers to these questions will, across the board and in the long run, depend the health of that “relationship” between the library world and the auction room which it is my assignment to consider.

When I was discussing acquisition problems at a not unimportant or inactive university library recently, those in charge explained to me that they were unable to bid at auction at all. Each single expenditure, it seemed, had to be authorized by an echelon of state officials; and while these were always ready to sign a properly approved requisition for a specified amount, the machinery made no provision for an unspecified amount. And such, being literal-minded men, the officials considered an auction bid to be. My advice to the librarian was simple: file a requisition for twice the amount you propose to bid, and either put the change into an emergency purchasing fund or go back to the treasurer after the sale and tell him how clever you have been to get the book for half price (or of course even less). I do not know whether my advice has been taken, and I dare say this particular library was not a representative case, even among the comparative newcomers in the rare book and manuscript race. But I do know from my travels (in forty-four states of the Union by now) that the problem of bidding at auction is often a vexing one to a university librarian. And I do not wonder.

First of all, he may be under the illusion (for such I think it) that he ought to economize on an agent’s commission and do his bidding direct with the auction house. This may seem, superficially, easier if the sale is at Parke-Bernet in New York rather than at Sotheby’s or the Hotel Drouot: not because New York is, in terms of modern communications, any closer than London or Paris, but because New York cataloging and promotional techniques have been, since the gay and gaudy days of Mitchell Kennerley at the old Anderson Galleries, steadily beamed at the private or institutional buyer, over the heads of the booksellers. This, among other things, costs the owner nearly twice as much in auction charges, which is why so many American collections are nowadays being sent to London for sale.
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But it puts the New York auction house under a heavier obligation in such matters as the answering of further inquiries about some particular lot, the provision of estimates, and other peripheral services rendered without charge. Continental auction houses regularly issue printed lists of estimates. London practice is to provide them only on request. But if the librarian and his advisers need the auctioneer's assistance in arriving at an efficacious bid, he can get it from any of them. If he does not know it, he should be warned that New York and Continental estimates are customarily optimistic, while Sotheby's are as a matter of policy conservative—sometimes, I have thought, too conservative.

The fact is, however, that all auction houses are always working under heavy pressure. They are not, and they cannot be, geared to take care of all those requirements of the individual purchaser, be he private or institutional, which are legitimately expected of a bookseller. If you, as the prospective bidder, are on the spot you can (and should) go and inspect, and if necessary collate, your quarry. You can also take the price-temperature, which often moves sharply and fast when the books go on view. But if you are far away you cannot expect much more detail from the auction house than is in the catalog; and you cannot expect daily revisions of a cabled or airmailed response to your request for an estimate. If, when the time comes, you have entrusted your bid to the auctioneer, it will be executed with perfect fidelity in the strictest confidence; but it will of necessity be executed without any elasticity. Moreover if, when you have secured your book, you find that there is anything so wrong with it as to justify returning it as imperfect, the fourteen days' grace will probably have elapsed.

Even if the practice of most experienced collectors and most worldly-wise rare book librarians had not for years endorsed it, I should still consider that the path of wisdom is to entrust your bid to a trusted agent on the spot. It then becomes his duty to see that the book conforms to the catalog description, to advise you on its condition, to give you his own opinion on the expectable price and report the local consensus, to cable you at the last moment if he judges that the bid you have given him is not going to be good enough. He will handle your bid or bids at the sale, which can sometimes be a very delicate operation. If he senses, when he has reached the limit, that one more bid or even two more bids will win the lot, he will use his discretion—to a degree based on his knowledge of the item and his experience of his client's likely reaction to the alternative of having
to pay more than he bargained for or losing the book. He will “clear” the lots secured after the sale, and ship them to you, and pay for them within the stipulated thirty days, billing you in due course. If collation of the book discloses some unnoticed imperfection, he will deal with the question of return. If the book is important enough to require (from England or France) an export license, he will apply for it on your behalf. All this he does for 10 per cent (or sometimes, by special arrangement, for less). And three-quarters of it he will have done for nothing if someone outbids him for the book. To me, it has always seemed a very cheap rate of insurance.

The librarian (or the private collector) who decides to use an agent for his auction bidding has often been heard to ask one question to which, as far as I know, there is no answer in the book or rules. When Issue Editor Hellmut Lehmann-Haupt was cajoling me into writing this article, he phrased it thus: “what does a rare book dealer do if he is asked by more than one customer to bid for the same item at a given auction?” I cannot speak for the entire antiquarian book trade of our two countries (I could not get an answer out of H. P. Kraus Company). [H. P. Kraus usually buys for his own stock. He so rarely executes bids for others that any answer to this question of overlapping commissions would have to be a purely academic and hence meaningless one.—Editor’s Note.] I imagine that practice varies. But the few replies to a letter of inquiry addressed to The Clique, the principal English trade periodical, confirmed my impression that the usual practice in England at any rate is for the bookseller to decline a second bid if an equal or a higher one has already been accepted, explaining that he is already committed; and if the higher bid arrives second, to inform the first would-be bidder of the fact, without disclosing the amount. An even more scrupulous formula came from an English country bookseller. “I regretfully refuse the second commission to bid,” he wrote—regardless, it seems of its perhaps being higher—“and refer the prospective purchaser to another bookseller. A man cannot serve two masters and it is not the bookseller’s duty to conduct a private auction, nor to reveal to either party the existence of another bidder.” There will be occasions, no doubt, when a second bid arrives too late for the bookseller to advise either party. He will then have to treat them exactly as they would be treated if they had been entrusted to the auction house (which locks each bid up till sale day, saying nothing to anybody): that is to say, if A’s bid is $100 and B’s $200, B will secure the lot for $105, unless any one else bids higher.
Book Auctions

The big-time book-auction business has always been concentrated in a handful of metropolitan centers. An occasional sale in Philadelphia or Chicago or San Francisco or Edinburgh or Dublin may rate inclusion in the annual records, but to all intents and purposes the English-speaking world depends on London and New York. Between the Hoe sale of 1911 and the late 'forties the dispersals of great collections were fairly evenly divided between the two cities; for if the libraries of stately homes came to Bond Street, the current American practice of giving collections away and taking a tax-deduction had not then started to impoverish the top soil of connoisseurship, and great collections like Clawson, Kern, Spoor, Terry, Newton, Hogan, Wilmerding, and Bishop came back into circulation via Madison Avenue—to which, indeed, such famous British collections as Buxton Forman and Lothian were also attracted by the boom prices of the 1920's.

The past decade, however, seems to have restored London in general and Sotheby's in particular to that position of pre-eminence which had been undisputed in the nineteenth century. I do not recall a single European library or collection of any importance being sent to New York for sale since 1930; while since 1954, when the British Treasury lifted the wartime currency restrictions on books and works of art, half a dozen considerable American collections have been consigned to London. Indeed, the steady decrease in the volume of important libraries (other than of Western Americana) which have been coming into the sale room in New York reached such a point two years ago that the editor of American Book Prices Current, that excellent annual record, was constrained to include London sale prices as well, by way of makeweight. And anyone who cares to look at the introductions to the last two volumes of ABPC and compare the annual turnover of the principal book-auction houses in the two cities can read the story plain enough. The figures for the 1959-60 season, for printed books, manuscripts, and autograph letters and documents, and prints, were:

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<th>Parke-Bernet, New York</th>
<th>Sotheby’s, London</th>
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<td>Sales</td>
<td>13</td>
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<td>Books and MSS.</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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I have concentrated here, for comparison, on the principal book auction house in each city, excluding Christie’s and Hodgson’s in London.
JOHN CARTER

(£49,878 and £58,754, respectively), and the handful of minor houses in New York.

It would be hypocritical, in view of my association with Sotheby's, to pretend that I regret the undoubted fact that London is nowadays securing a much larger share of the cake (not only in the book field but in the fine arts field as a whole). We have worked hard to get it, and I believe we earn it. What I do regret, and here my friends at Parke-Bernet would unfeignedly agree with me, is that the cake itself is shrinking fast, and mostly in the American sector. "If the great collections of the past had not been sold," said Robert Hoe, one of the giants among American collectors, "where would I have found my books?" I am aware that I am addressing a library audience. But I shall not therefore refrain from adapting his words to the predicament of the potential Robert Hoe of 1970: If the great collections of today are almost all destined for institutional libraries, where am I going to find my books?
Organization and Structure of the American Antiquarian Book Trade

SOL. M. MALKIN

Throughout the centuries there have been a considerable number of both informal and formal book trade associations, all of them concerned with currently printed and published works. It was not until 1906 that a group of British dealers formally organized the Antiquarian Booksellers Association, and, since it was the first of its kind, added "International" to its name. Other countries followed in course of time, but, despite some abortive attempts, it was not until late 1948 that the first productive organizational meeting was held in the United States, with the consequent incorporation in 1959 of the Antiquarian Booksellers Association of America.

Although membership in the A.B.A.A. (as it is popularly known) is about 320, representing 260 firms, its influence is far beyond that of its small proportion of the total in the antiquarian book trade. The objects of the association, as stated in its constitution, have acted as a stabilizing force in the trade:

1. To further friendly relations and a cooperative spirit among members.
2. To stimulate interest in collecting books by private collectors and public institutions.
3. To uphold the status of the antiquarian book trade and maintain its high professional standards.
4. To encourage the advancement of the technical and general knowledge of those engaged in bookselling.
5. To act as an association in matters where individual action would be less likely to succeed.
6. To promote exhibitions of books and related material; and to obtain publicity for the benefit of the trade as a whole.

Mr. Malkin is Editor of Antiquarian Bookman: The Specialist Book Trade Weekly and AB Bookman’s Yearbook: The Specialist Book Trade Annual.
7. To cooperate with similar organizations for these purposes, in this country and abroad.

The many A.B.A.A. projects, exhibits, leaflets, and educational materials have been of considerable aid in promoting understanding of the antiquarian book trade. Its firm policy on the credit standing of its members and its mediation of disputes between members, and between members and individuals and institutions, have been most helpful. Indeed, in a trade so individualistic, it is impressive that the A.B.A.A. has been able to maintain so cohesive a group.

As the current president, G. T. Goodspeed, mentioned in a talk to a group of New England librarians,1 "It is, of course, to be understood that many highly respected booksellers have not joined our association, and we do not represent that all our members are saints. We hope, however, that the existence of such an organization will help us to maintain a reputation for responsibility and integrity that will benefit both our customers and ourselves."

In addition to the work of the national organization (implemented by five regional chapters: New England, Middle Atlantic, Midwest, Northern California, and Southern California), there are international advantages gained through the A.B.A.A.'s affiliation with the International League of Antiquarian Booksellers. I.L.A.B. (as it is popularly known) is made up of the antiquarian book trade associations of Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, and the U.S.A. The current international president is R. S. Wormser, the former secretary and president of the A.B.A.A.

The annual A.B.A.A. meetings and I.L.A.B. congresses afford an excellent opportunity for member-dealers throughout the country and the world to meet, exchange experiences, buy and sell, insure professional standards of the antiquarian book trade, and further international cooperation among its members. (There are also a few independent regional groups of antiquarian dealers in America, notably one in the Philadelphia area.)

In addition to the formal organization of the antiquarian booksellers in America, there are other earlier and continuing "methods of communication" in the antiquarian book trade in America. Book auctions, which have been discussed in another article by John Carter, are an important method of buying and selling antiquarian books, and setting standards of prices—always to be interpreted with care by expert bookmen.
Perhaps even more important than the auction is the antiquarian book catalog. Indeed, this is so important that an entire special issue of Library Trends might well be devoted to this subject. Next to a history of booksellers should be a supplementary one of booksellers’ catalogs. A start has been made by Archer Taylor, but a complete study of the field is a pressing need in the book world. So many great catalogs of great booksellers come to mind that it would be invidious to fill even a few pages with some of the leading examples...

Here we can only note that the antiquarian book catalog is the life-blood of the antiquarian book trade. This is the first and favored reading of dealers and collectors—and should also be by librarians. How often does a head librarian, an acquisitions chief, put aside antiquarian catalogs for routine chores and new book orders, and then find in an old list the item for which he had been searching for so long? How often does he order belatedly and find: “Sorry, sold long ago” is the answer from the dealer...

“The trade is its own best customer” is a truism in the antiquarian book world, and the first order of business for dealers is to turn to the latest catalogs of their colleagues, to check and order promptly the desired items, and then perhaps to re-list them in their own catalogs! Not too often—but enough times—we have watched with fascination the ascent of a “sleeper” in a grubby mimeographed list to a top desideratum in a rare book catalog!

Now we come to our own personal niche in the antiquarian book trade, the Antiquarian Bookman: The Specialist Book Trade Weekly and The AB Bookman’s Yearbook: The Specialist Book Trade Annual, which is edited and published by this author. Every major country has a major magazine which carries lists of book wants (desiderata, wants lists, etc.) of the book trade. Fellow dealers respond with “quotation cards,” advising which items they can supply, specifying edition, condition, price, etc.

In the United States and Canada, the Antiquarian Bookman fulfills this important function. Unique in the world, however, is the AB Bookman’s Yearbook, which appears annually and lists the permanent book wants of dealers throughout the world. This annual also contains “The O.P. Market: A Reference Directory of Antiquarian and Specialist Booksellers.” This list of some two thousand specialties of over a thousand booksellers has proved quite useful to librarians, as a reference tool for themselves and for private parties, both in buying and selling books.
May we immediately confess that we deliberately discourage librarians from advertising their lists of book wants in *Antiquarian Bookman*. It is not that we love librarians the less, rather that we love booksellers the more. We have always felt that libraries were best served by dealers in their own specialties, and that it was an exceptional bookman who could combine both functions of librarian and bookseller. To be sure, there are some libraries that find satisfactory other methods of procuring desiderata, such as sending mimeographed lists to a select number of dealers, using the mimeographed facilities of The Fourth Avenue Booksellers (NYC), The American Antiquarian Booksellers (Philadelphia) for their own members, etc. But we cannot help but feel that librarians employing such limited methods do not take full advantages of the complete resources of the entire antiquarian book world that are open to the experienced, specialist bookseller.

For some thirty-five years we have visited librarians and libraries throughout this country and abroad, on personal, business, and goodwill missions. We have never ceased wondering on the vast amount of ignorance—or, worse yet, misinformation—most librarians have about booksellers and the antiquarian book trade (old and rare, used, and out-of-print).

Breathes there a librarian who has not visited a bookshop and said to himself, “If I could only take a week, month, or year off and organize this place!”? Breathes there a librarian who does not consider booksellers “characters,” rugged individualists, if not anarchists, who operate independently, obtain books by sorcery, price them by cabalistic necromancy, and sell them by black magic?

But no matter where the dealer is located, in a large city, a small town, a book farm or house, on an island or on top of a mountain, there is a medium of communication in the antiquarian book trade that makes the wares of the individual dealer available to the entire book world. In what other trade can a person walk into a shop, or telephone, or inquire by mail, ask for a specific item manufactured hundreds of years ago, and obtain it in a matter of days, weeks or months, depending on how badly he wants and how much he is willing to pay for the item?

This requires a professional searching method in the antiquarian book trade, and often the dealer himself is unaware of the many complex steps in such a procedure.

The first and obvious step—sometimes overlooked—is the book-
seller's own stock. Sometimes—often, if he is a specialist in the kind of book requested—it is immediately available and the transaction is summarily concluded. Sometimes, the dealer will remember having seen the item in a colleague's store, catalog, or perhaps in the library of a collector who occasionally sells duplicates and no longer desired items.

But most often, faced with a long list of book wants, the dealer will promptly mail it to his specialist book trade weekly which will promptly print it, together with thousands of other book wants by fellow dealers, here and abroad.

At the last breakdown of the circulation of Antiquarian Bookman, it was calculated that of the 5,000-plus bookmen who get "AB," about 2,800 are antiquarian booksellers, about 500 are new book shops, and the remainder are publishers, editors, collectors, and librarians (heads, rare book librarians, accession chiefs, and just plain bookmen of all kinds, sizes, and shapes).

A goodly number of the above regularly go through the weekly issues of AB, mark off the items requested that they have on hand, and send off quotation cards, advising the advertiser that they can supply the desired titles, edition, condition, and price wanted, usually postpaid. (Quoter knows cost of postage, advertiser can only guess). Most quoters send out from five to fifty cards a week, some a hundred a week, and a few large dealers as many as five hundred a week.

But it would be a mistake to think that only dealers send "quote" cards. In recent years a number of regularly employed, as well as retired, librarians have entered into the field, making full use of their knowledge and personal libraries. In addition, many a noted publisher, editor, and collector find it pleasurable as well as profitable to dispose of some of their books through this method. Many foreign booksellers also use airmail both ways to provide prompt quotations. Indeed, so many West Coast dealers receive AB by airmail that they usually send quotations to East Coast dealers before the latter receive their own AB copies by regular third-class mail!

To be sure, not all the advertisers are so promptly supplied with copies of their desiderata. If the list of book wants comprises common out-of-print titles, the advertiser can expect 100 per cent return from hundreds of quotations of varying price, according to condition and experience (or lack of it) of quoter. But for an average list, 50 per cent is considered a good return on book wants; if items are in considerable demand and scarcity, 10 to 25 per cent is good, and repeat
advertisements ("standing," "till forbid") are usually employed for the remaining titles still needed.

There are also a considerable number of titles regularly bought and sold by antiquarian book dealers, particularly by specialists in certain fields, and for this purpose they usually employ the many sections in the *AB Bookman's Yearbook: The Specialist Book Trade Annual*, especially its main feature, "The O.P. Market," which is the most comprehensive in the field for professional bookmen.

In essence, this is the major method for procurement of desiderata by the antiquarian book trade in America, to the tune of three-quarters of a million books a year, a not inconsiderable part of the entire trade volume. There are other minor, personal, and regional methods but these can vary considerably according to immediate and transient needs.

Thus, the day of the book-scout is practically gone. Before World War II, there were many competent booksellers, fulltime, who crossed continents looking for books, supplying wants, finding "sleepers," and the like. Today the cost of such travel is prohibitive, and only a handful of old-timers are still active, with most book-scouting now being done regionally by part-time and "moonlighting" booksellers.

In summation: there are both formal and informal organizations and methods of communication in the antiquarian book trade in America, as in the entire book world. For the antiquarian trade is truly international. There are indeed, all kinds of antiquarian book shops, with gradations from general used books up to the most rarefied strata of specialist rare books dealers, where the top desiderata will almost always eventually gravitate.

To be sure, librarians will occasionally procure a top item or lot, by private treaty, but in the long run the entire book world is best served by the antiquarian booksellers who have devoted their lifetimes to the conscious—or unconscious—purpose of all professional bookmen: Getting the right book to the right party at the right place at the right time at the right price.

References

Code of Fair Practices for Dealers and Librarians

[The following originally appeared, in a slightly different form, in The 1957 AB, and in the ALA Bulletin (Nov. 1957). It was approved at the Mid-winter Meeting (Jan. 1958) of the A.L.A. Resources and Technical Services Division with a recommendation that the A.L.A. "transmit it for endorsement to appropriate national associations of book sellers."

Approvals

A librarian may ask to receive from dealers a selection of new books on approval if the account is considerable and if substantially all of the approval books are retained. He cannot ordinarily request this service plus attractive discounts and other services if his purchasing is highly selective, sometimes in single copies, and if the annual volume is small.

Rare books, autographs and similar materials may usually be had on approval, when there is a need to inspect them for content, condition, binding, when the bibliographic description is inadequate, or for like reasons.

When rarities are requested on approval, they should be examined immediately and the order confirmed or should be returned promptly and with all possible care. If, as may well happen, the librarian wants to retain an expensive rarity for a time in the hope that he can thereby find someone to buy it for him, the dealer should be told this frankly. If it is not an item for which the dealer is likely to have other orders, or if he is willing to gamble on the librarian’s successful quest, he will usually agree; but if he cannot afford to risk a sale, or for any reason does not want to put up with delays incidental to such negotiations, it is his prerogative to decline an extension of the approval period.

Unsolicited items sent on approval, rare with established and reputable dealers, should be discouraged. Dealers who send unrequested approvals must understand that they do so at their own risk and that the shipments may be returned unopened at the dealers’ expense.

Auction Buying

Librarians, if they wish, should feel free to bid themselves rather than use the services of an agent at United States auctions which are, in effect, open markets. Most librarians find, however, that the advantages of depending upon a responsible agent are well worth the commission fee. The agent has opportunity to examine the books offered prior to the sale, as the librarian generally has not; he may also be better aware of the current market; and he assumes at least a reasonable degree of responsibility for books being as represented.

In arranging for the service of an agent at an auction sale, the librarian should make his instructions clear concerning the ceiling of his bid. Generally this is worked out cooperatively, the librarian making his estimate of the price an item will bring and comparing it with the agent’s and the gallery’s estimates. From this consultation the librarian decides how high he is willing to go, whether higher or lower than the joint estimate, depending, among other things, on the importance of the book to the library and the difficulty of finding another copy. The agent is of course bound to observe price ceilings.
Because of differences of practice from the United States auctions, it is advisable at foreign auctions, which are more in the nature of a wholesale market, for a library to work through a trusted agent.

**Catalogs, Want Lists, Quotations**

Libraries generally acquire rare and out-of-print books by searching dealers' catalogs, by issuing want lists, and by advertising. It is important to libraries, therefore, that catalog entries be bibliographically adequate, that they include such essential elements as series notes, and that they describe accurately the condition of the books offered. Similarly, a library want list should be bibliographically adequate, and any dealer to whom it is sent should be told whether or not it is sent to him exclusively. In advertising, titles are cited as briefly as possible, but if a particular edition is sought it must be indicated. In quoting upon want lists, dealers must specify the edition offered, the condition of the copy, and the terms of sale. For its part, the library should act upon quotations promptly and if possible acknowledge all quotations received.

**Copying**

Manuscripts, or any other unique items, in a library's possession on approval from a dealer or on deposit from a private person should not be copied in any way without the concurrence of the owner. Such copying often alters the market value. The value can also be affected if access to the material is given to persons not concerned with the acquisition.

If a private owner agrees to permit a copy to be made, it is well to inform him that such a copy may affect the sale of the material.

**Discounts**

A library is free to bargain for discounts and to select vendors, recognizing that discounts offered may vary widely between institutions, and that in general such discounts reflect the annual volume of business between the vendor and the individual institution, the nature of the material ordered, and the degree of incidental attention to be demanded or expected. Thus, the jobber may be able to offer a relatively high discount on multiple copies of popular books—higher than a small retailer can afford—but he cannot be expected to provide personalized services, such as procuring out-of-the-way pamphlet material, as perhaps the small retailer can.

A library is likely to spread its current book purchases among several suppliers. It may give the multiple-copy commercial orders to a jobber to be supplied at an agreed discount based on a year's anticipated dollar volume; it may use another bookseller for more difficult-to-find current books; it may depend on yet another bookseller for out-of-print books; and it may go to the specialists for technical, foreign, or rare books and for other special categories of material. The library's discounts customarily may range from as much as 40 per cent plus on multiple copies of current trade books to quoted net price on out-of-print or rare books, and sometimes a premium may quite appropriately be charged on special-order material particularly difficult to procure and otherwise impossible for a dealer to handle profitably.

In bargaining for discounts, the librarian must always remember that the
terms agreed upon, and the conditions of payment, are calculated on a certain anticipated volume of orders of a given kind and certain bibliographic services. To drop a dealer in midstream without compelling reason and due warning once terms have been agreed upon is a breach of faith. On the other hand, a dealer's failure to perform service promised or implied when the discount scale was established relieves the library from this implicit obligation.

Evaluations

Informal appraisal of the value of a book, manuscript, or collection is a technical and responsible task which it is wise to leave to recognized appraisers or otherwise competent persons whose judgment and experience can be had for an appropriate charge. A bookseller acting as intermediary for a library in a private sale or an auction will generally provide an appraisal of the property without adding an extra fee to his agent's commission.

Appraisals by librarians for tax purposes are usually to be avoided. Often they are requested by a library donor and sometimes they are not high enough to please him. If they must be made by the librarian, he should do so as though he were an official appraiser who might have to defend his judgment in court and thereby stake his reputation as an expert and for integrity.

Generally, requests for the approximate value of a book are best answered by directing the inquirer to a bookseller or appraiser, or by referral to auction or other price records. If the inquirer is introduced to these records he should be warned that they can be only the most general guide.

Unrealistic news stories or public statements concerning the value of rare books or manuscripts are frequently released by dealers, sometimes by libraries themselves. Information made public relating to the monetary value of books and manuscripts and their rare or unusual qualities should be strictly truthful. It is usually better to stress the cultural or historical values of items than their estimated dollar worth.

Returns

A dealer accepts the return of an item supplied against a firm order only as a courtesy, except when the item proves not to be as represented, when it is found to be defective, or if it fails to follow the specifications of the order, in which cases the return can be made without a formal request. If the return is for any other reason, the librarian should first ask the privilege of returning. The nature of the material and of the vendor's business are the determining factors in returns; for example, a current stock item from a general bookshop can be returned at no greater loss to the dealer than the waste of billing and shipping labor, and generally will be accepted from a good customer, provided of course that it comes back in the same condition in which sold, undamaged and unmarked; on the other hand an out-of-print or special order book for which there is no wide market, or a rare book which the dealer has gone to the expense of seeking out and cataloging (and for which he may have turned down subsequent orders) should not be returned under ordinary circumstances.

Sale of Duplicates and Discards

Duplicates and other unwanted library books should be dispersed of with the
idea always in mind that once off the library premises they are back in the open book market. It follows that all marks of library ownership (that is, all clearly understandable marks such as book plates and perforated stampings) must be cancelled. Usually it is enough to counterstamp such marks “discarded,” “withdrawn,” “rejected,” or with a similar word or phrase. Exceptional or valuable material whose possession by someone other than the library might appear to be irregular may be accompanied by a simple bill of sale or other document authenticating the transfer of ownership.
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PREPARED BY BETTY M. E. CROFT

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