



Aldus Society Notes

Winter-Spring, 2011

Volume 11, No.1

February 10 Program to Feature Ohio's Underground Railroad

The fascinating story behind the Wilbur H. Siebert Collection housed at the Ohio Historical Society will be the topic of our February program. Three dedicated historians from the Ohio Historical Society will present the evening's program: Liz Plummer, Unit Manager of Reference Services, Jason Crabill, Manager for Curatorial Services, and Jillian Carney, Manager of Digital Services. They will share these historic materials which contain correspondence, notes, manuscripts, student papers, maps, and photographs relating to the Underground Railroad in Ohio.

A professor of history at Ohio State from 1891 to 1935, Siebert found that students in his American history classes "were inclined to be restless and inattentive," so he decided to arouse their interest over a mysterious and romantic subject that was rich in adventure. In 1891, there



Wilbur H. Siebert amassed a landmark collection of materials on Ohio history, including the Underground Railroad

were only four books devoted to the subject of the Underground Railroad, but Siebert's students had heard about it from their parents and grandparents.

The students provided hundreds of responses to his seven-question survey and provided names and addresses of individuals who might have first-hand knowledge of the Underground Railroad.

During vacations Siebert

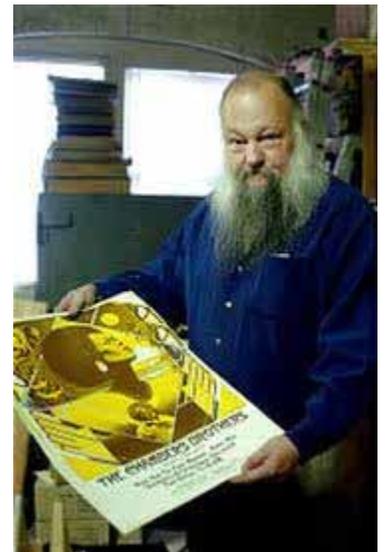
traveled Underground Railroad routes, conducted interviews, and kept extensive research notes. In addition, his research also included

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Ken Sanders will be March 10 Aldus Speaker

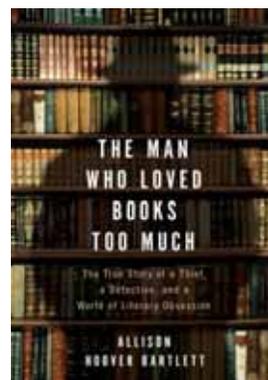
Our Annual Ravneberg Lecturer this year will be Ken Sanders, ABAA.

For over 30 years, Sanders has been engaged in buying, selling, appraising, and publishing new and old books. He specializes in Utah and the Mormons, western and Native Americana, travels and explorations, rare maps and photographs, the literary West and modern first editions, and paper ephemera of all kinds.



He is also an appraiser for *Antiques Roadshow*, and a publisher (www.dreamgarden.com).

Sanders is also well known for the role he played in catching the infamous book thief John Gilkey, who is the subject of a book by Allison Hoover Bartlett called *The Man Who Loved Books Too Much: The True Story of a Thief, a Detective, and a World of Literary Obsession*.



Sanders was named Security Chair of the Antiquarian Booksellers' Association of America just as Gilkey kicked his book stealing spree into high gear.

He became Gilkey's nemesis, a book detective who tracked, iden-

(continued on page 10)

The Aldus Society

TRUSTEES, 2010-2011

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

from Genie Hoster

Last week your Aldus trustees met to discuss all things Aldus - what we've accomplished in the past ten years, where we are now, and of course what we'd like to provide Aldus members in the future...and how we'll get these things done. It was a fruitful meeting, thanks to Laralyn Sasaki's gentle, professional facilitation.

Over the next few months we'll be meeting by committee (membership, programming, etc.) to address goals and focus on how to meet them. You'll see some quiet changes in the coming year or two...nothing drastic, but even more interesting Aldus activities and speakers. Resuming the Ladies Luncheons (see page 5) is a perfect example of the enthusiasm and energy that Aldus members are contributing to the organization.

I want to thank all of you for renewing your memberships. There's still time to renew if you haven't done so already. Roughly 10 percent of our current members have joined in the past year. That's a gratifying number for any non-profit organization, especially in this economy. We're hoping to add more members this coming year through joint ventures with other bookish organizations and also through Eric Johnson's new book collecting group on the OSU campus.

Several of our trustee's terms will be completed this spring, so we will have vacancies on our board. In addition, we've committed to enlarging our committees to increase their effectiveness. If you feel you have something you'd like to contribute to Aldus (time, ideas, expertise in the new social media) do let us know. We'd love to have you join with us in making the next ten years as fun and educational as in the past.

All the best -

Genie

Aldus Society Meetings

Regular meetings of the Aldus Society are held at 7:30 PM on the second Thursday of the month at

**The Thurber Center
91 Jefferson Avenue
Columbus, Ohio**

☞ Socializing Begins One-Half Hour Before ☞

King James Bible Conference is Aldus Focus for May

In May we will have a program in conjunction with Ohio State's international symposium celebrating the 400th anniversary of the original publication of the King James (or Authorized) Version of the Bible. The conference, scheduled for the first weekend of May, will focus on the making of the KJV and its range of influence from Milton and Bunyan to Faulkner, Woolf, and Toni Morrison.



Events will include plenary lectures and discussions, scholarly panels, and readings by contemporary writers.

There will also be an exhibit mounted by the Rare Books and Manuscripts Library.

We will be announcing the date, time and meeting place for this program later on the listserv.

Aldus Keepsake to be Published

In recognition of The Aldus Society's tenth anniversary, we will be publishing a special keepsake booklet. It will include a brief history of Aldus, quotes from members and from founding members, and other information.

Nancy Campbell is heading this project. In addition, a number of Aldus members are assisting on its completion, including Lois Smith and Laralyn Sasaki with copy editing, Hal Stevens with design, Ann Alaia Woods, and Bob Tauber and The Logan Elm Press, where it will be printed. This is a limited edition and will not be available to the public, but will be free to current members.

All Things Dewey to be Discussed at April 14th Program

"All Things Dewey" will be presented by Larry Olszewski, director of the OCLC library. The content of the program will cover three areas.

"The Man" will deal with Dewey's life and his accomplishments, many of which were revolutionary at the time. "The System" will briefly describe how the Dewey Decimal Classification works so well. "The Legacy" will describe how important Melvil Dewey is today.



Melvil Dewey

The Dewey Decimal Classification system, for example, is not only the most widely used classification system in the world, but it is also being applied to non-library settings. Some of Dewey's other accomplishments (the founding of the American Library Association and a library school)

are still very much in evidence today; others (spelling reform), not so much.

Larry will be bringing in some original Dewey artifacts, such as a copy of the very first scheme and a draft of the second in Dewey's own handwriting.

OCLC was formed when Ohio libraries came together to create a nonprofit membership organization dedicated to the public purposes of furthering access to the world's information and reducing information costs. This organization came to be OCLC, which originally stood for Ohio College Library Center. Among OCLC's many notable achievements was the establishment of WorldCat, which holds tens of millions of bibliographic records that represent more than one billion items.

HOLIDAY DINNER & AUCTION



The Annual Aldus Holiday Dinner and Silent Auction was held this past December 6th. As in years past, we had over 50 people in attendance, and we were able to meet up with both new and old friends, bid on books and other bibliotreasures, and enjoy an evening of warm bibliofellowship. Over \$1400 was raised from the auction; this money will support Aldus programming, including the Annual Ravneberg Memorial speaker.

Thanks so much to Christine Hayes for making arrangements for the family-style meal at La Scala Italian Bistro, and to Laralyn Sasaki and her book elves (Amy Bostic, Nancy Campbell, Marilyn Logue and Kassie Rose) for all the time spent organizing and publicizing the silent auction.

New activities were added this year: we had an auction preview, which was held at the Ohioana Library (a special Thanks to Beth Poley and Linda Hengst for their assistance). In addition we had a raffle for a gift certificate to Mozart's bakery/café and for a generous gift certificate to Acorn Bookshop which raised an additional \$177.

Thanks to everyone for their generous bids, donations, and time which made this event a great success.



Bill Radloff

Silent Auction Chair Laralyn Sasaki puts the finishing touch on the auction items



George Cowmeadow Bauman

Geoff Smith & Emerson Gilbert



George Cowmeadow Bauman

Dinner Chair Christine Hayes gives Laralyn a "thank-you" present for all her hard work



Bill Radloff

Genie & Jay Hoster



Bill Radloff



ABOVE: Marcia Preston, Willkie Cirker & Sharon Hamersely
BENEATH: Kassie Rose & Lois Smith with the raffle ticket proceeds
BELOW: Book elf Nancy Campbell & Laralyn making up auction lots



George Cowmeadow Bauman

ABOVE: And the winning tie is...
BELOW: Bill & Carol Logue



Bill Radloff



Lois Smith

SEIBERT, from page 1

copies of notes from books, diaries, letters, photographs, newspaper articles, biographies, state and local histories, census reports, legislation, and Congressional speeches. After his retirement, Siebert collected his research materials and bound them in volumes according to geographic location. At age 80, Siebert took an office at the Ohio State Museum, where he wrote his final book, *The Mysteries of Ohio's Underground Railroads* (1951).



The Hanby House in Westerville and the Kelton House on East Town Street were two stops on Ohio's Underground Railroad.

The Ohio Historical Society has digitized the Ohio-related Underground Railroad items in the Siebert collection. Our speakers will share why the materials were digitized, how this was done, and how access can be made to these photos and documents. You can find many of them on www.ohiomemory.org.

The collection has also been microfilmed by the Society and can be viewed at the OHS library. In addition, most of the Civil War related materials are available on the Ohio Historical Society's website, where they are divided into a number of categories including photographs/prints of Underground Railroad conductors, operators, and station-keepers; anti-slavery advocates; and structures/sites associated with the Underground Railroad in Ohio.

Have You Renewed?

Have you renewed your Aldus membership for 2011? If you haven't this is your last newsletter! Your membership entitles you to attend the many field trips, workshops, and special members' activities such as our holiday dinner and summer picnic. In addition you will receive a membership directory, our newsletter, and this year only - a copy of the Aldus keepsake which recognizes our Tenth Anniversary year.

Membership forms are available on the Aldus website: www.aldussociety.com

Aldus Ladies Luncheons Return

After a brief hiatus, the Aldus Ladies Luncheons will return this year with a seasonal schedule, and a little twist on our get-togethers. We will meet quarterly, once each season, on a Saturday, either at someone's home or at La Chatelaine on Lane Avenue. Carol Logue and Marcia Preston have hosted many of these luncheons in the past, which were always enjoyable. If you come this time, please bring a book or two that you've recently read to share with the group after lunch.

Marcia has graciously volunteered to host the next luncheon at her lovely home at 3456 Sunningdale Way in Upper Arlington. She will be making a main dish, and if you come, you could bring a salad, bread, or a dessert. When you RSVP, tell what you're planning to bring, so we don't overload the dessert cart!

Here's the tentative schedule for 2011, so you can plan ahead. These dates are on the second Saturday of each of the following months, and will begin at noon.



SAVE THESE DATES:

February 12
May 14
August 13
November 12

We'll send a reminder on the listserv in advance of each luncheon

as a reminder. If you're interested in hosting, just let Lois Smith or Susan Johnson know and we'll help you plan. Susan has kindly volunteered to keep track of the side dish signups!

Please RSVP by Feb. 8th ONLY IF YOU PLAN TO ATTEND the February 12th Luncheon to Susan Johnson at lilysuej@gmail.com



Fall 2010 Program Highlights



Bob sent us this photo of Twain, the last image taken before Twain died.



“Mark Twain-iac” Bob Slotta kicked off the fall program season with updates on Twain’s autobiography which was being published in 2010, the 100th anniversary of Twain’s death. The eventual trilogy will run to half a million words, and will shed new light on the quintessentially American writer. Bob shared insights on the family, particularly Twain’s daughter Clara, who had formed a close friendship with a woman who lived her final years in Columbus’ First Community Village. Bob also shared excerpts from the manuscript of a book that Clara wrote.

Bob has given several programs about Mark Twain to Aldus and also participated in our Celebration of the Book in 2005, speaking on Twain, of course.

In October, Fr. Michael Suarez, Director of the Rare Book School at the University of Virginia, visited Columbus to talk to the English department at The Ohio State University and to The Aldus Society the following evening. Many Aldus members were fortunate to be able to attend both talks, which were in parts educational, passionate and spirited, and at every turn covered a multitude of book history information. Many people were awed that Fr. Michael’s talks were presented without notes.



At the evening reception at the Thompson Library, attendees were able to read through the library’s copy of the two-volume *Oxford Companion to the Book*, which Suarez co-edited. Suarez generously signed copies of this book which many brought to the reception. Past Aldus president Bill Evans brought our attention to the fact that The Aldus Society is mentioned in this massive compilation (and also that it is on the page opposite Alcoholics Anonymous).



In addition, The Pontifical College Josephinum hosted a field trip to their rare book room in their library for Fr. Suarez and Aldus members. We were privileged to examine some of the Aldine editions in their holdings, as well as the some dozen or so incunabula on the premises.



In November, Lou Schultz shared highlights of his collection on the War of 1812 in Ohio. Lou has been collecting in a number of interesting areas all of his life. He shared hints for collecting in an entertaining and wide-ranging talk which was accompanied by photos of the many items in his collection.

The highlight of his talk was his sharing a mammoth map of the Ohio territories where the War occurred. Lou is a member of the Governor’s Ohio War of 1812 Bicentennial Commission, a great tribute to his knowledge of and interest in the war.

Ten Years



Looking Back



Bob Tauber and Logan Elm Press have been the source of a number of past programs and workshops. Watch for more programs now that Bob's in his spiffy new quarters on Kenny Road.



History of Text Series

The Aldus Society has hosted a series of lectures on the History of Text. Topics covered to date have included Latin Epigraphy; Medieval Slavic, Latin and Hebrew manuscripts; Anglo-Saxon and Arabic manuscripts; Foxe's Book of Martyrs; the Digital Scriptorium as well as The St. Gall School and Scriptorium, and the publishing and collecting of Japanese and Chinese books. These programs have been videotaped and are available on VHS and/or DVD.



Aldus members like to participate in book events presented by other book organizations. *(above)* Aldus members provided book appraisals for Ohioana Library attendees this past year. In addition, Aldus members participated in the Columbus Metropolitan Library's Centennial Celebration. We held several book appraisal clinics and provided speakers including Ron Ravneberg and Geoff Smith talking on what makes a book collectible and searching for Captain Cook; Jay Hoster speaking on James Thurber; and Kassie Rose speaking about Ohio authors *(see picture at left...there was a famous guest in the audience).*



Since our beginning, The Aldus Society has been holding an annual summer picnic. In recent years they have been graciously hosted by Bill and Bea Rich. There's plenty of opportunity for lots of book talk and fellowship.

Ohio Celebrates the Book

In 2005 Aldus held The Celebration of the Book which was co-sponsored by the Friends of OSU Libraries. Guest speakers included noted author Nicholas Basbanes and book illustrator Barry Moser. Many Aldus members also participated in giving talks and book clinics. The two days of activities were held at the Wexner Center and CCAD campus.

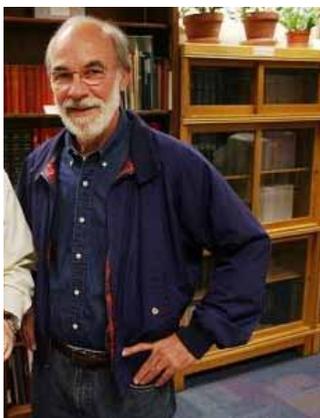
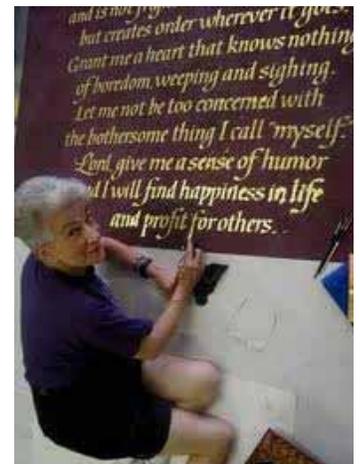


First Saturdays

Geoff Smith regularly hosts Aldus First Saturday programs at the Thompson Library. These informal events give Aldus members the opportunity to get up close and personal with some of the rarest and most interesting books in OSU's rare books collection. Some of our past programs have provided an opportunity to learn about the Nuremberg Chronicle, Ben Franklin, Cervantes, James Thurber, Captain Cook, facsimile editions, rare Shakespeare folios, Irish books and manuscripts, artists books, Caxton and other incunabula, and all things Chaucer. We are looking forward to these programs continuing far into the future.



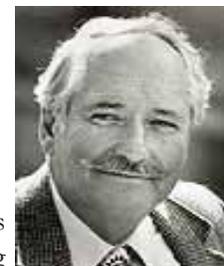
A number of speakers have presented multiple Aldus Programs. Ann Alaia Woods (*right*) has given several talks on the history of script writing, the history of papermaking, and conducted paper marbling workshops. Lucy Caswell (*left*) presented a program on the history of American comic books, introduced speaker/collector Richard West, and has given talks on Columbus cartoonist Billy Ireland.



Harry Campbell (*left*), our in-house expert on book and paper conservation, has presented programs to Aldus and participated in many of our multi-speaker programs.



Charlie Cole (*above right*) gave us lectures on the first books in Columbus, overlooked 19th century Columbus authors, and the literary legacy of Ohio's African-American authors.



Author Jack Matthews (*right*) has given us his observations on the future of book collecting and also spoke on Christopher Morley.

Ten Years



Looking Back



One of our most popular programs each year is “Aldus Presents,” where Aldus members talk about their collecting passions. Don Rice (*above*) and Kassie Rose (*right*) were among the first to participate.



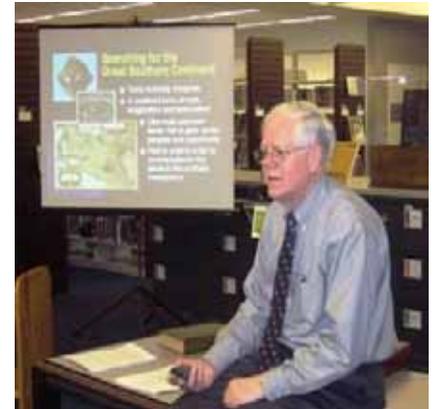
(*right*) Who can forget The Acorn Graveside Player’s readings on Halloween eve at the grave of Columbus humorist James Thurber? This was definitely a spirited event!



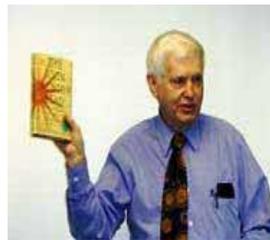
FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are part of our summer fun. We’ve visited such places as Mountain House in Chillicothe, home of the Dard Hunter studios (*see above*). We’ve travelled to Indianapolis to visit the Lilly Library and again to Chillicothe to see the collections in the McKell Library. Last year we visited the home of author Louis Bromfield (near Mansfield) where we had a tour of his home and a lovely dinner at the nearby restaurant (*see pictures at left*). More activities will be announced soon.

George Cowmeadow Bauman



REMEMBERING RON



We were fortunate to have Ron Ravneberg at the helm of Aldus for three years. We never tired of his talks about Captain Cook and of seeing all the various materials on Cook that he accumulated over the years. Ron was an inspiration to all of us and we miss him dearly.



Aldus members were on board with all the details of the Thompson Library renovation at The Ohio State University. Then-director Joe Branin gave us a preview talk at a holiday dinner. Later, we had a hard-hat tour mid-way through construction. Aldus members were invited to the opening reception, and since then Wes Boomgaarden has given us a personalized tour of the finished facility, which is awesome. BRAVO!



Gingrich (*above left*) was our first speaker and Dave Lilburne (*below left with Ron’s wife Janet*) was the second. This year, Ken Sanders will speak at our March program which honors Ron.

tified and exposed the prolific book thief, and sent him to jail.

“I would certainly be the last person to deny that I’m obsessed with books,” Sanders has said, stroking his long and scraggly gray and white beard. “If you want to say I’m obsessed with book thieves, as well, I probably wouldn’t argue that point either.” He said about Gilkey, “He’s a dirty little book thief and there’s nothing romantic about it. There’s nothing noble about him....He might have a passion for books but his passion is for thievery. As far as I’m concerned, he’s the man who loved to *steal* books too much.”

As ABAA Security Chair, he has been responsible for bringing numerous book thieves and forgers to justice. As an expert on forgeries, he has become the “go-to” person on Mark Hofmann, whom he has called “the greatest forger of the 20th century.” Hofmann forged many Mormon documents as well as the signatures of numerous famous authors. (See the sidebar reading list at the right for a list of books on this particular crime, and for the titles of other books about forgeries and book thefts.)

Sanders also has a long history of promoting the arts and literature and has hosted hundreds of book signings and art exhibitions, including the State of Utah’s largest ever poetry reading. He is the co-host of KCPW’s *Poetry is Wanted Here* radio show. In 2005, Ken was honored by the Salt Lake City Mayor’s Award for Contributions to the Arts.

Articles by Sanders have appeared in publications such as *OP* and *Firsts Magazine*. He has been the subject of articles in publications including *The Deseret News*, *The Salt Lake Tribune*, and *San Francisco Magazine*. He has often been featured in television and film interviews and shows, including C-Span’s *Book Talk*, and A&E’s *City Confidential: Mark Hofmann*.

In his talk to Aldus he will share some of the exciting episodes in his role as a biblio-detective, and he will update us on the status of people such as Gilkey (who at the time of this newsletter’s publication) was still perpetrating his biblio-crimes.



RELATED READING LIST

Books on Book Thieves

Allison Hoover Bartlett: *The Man Who Loved Books Too Much: The True Story of a Thief, a Detective, and a World of Literary Obsession*. That John Gilkey is an obsessed book collector is beyond question. Ken Sanders opened the door to the world of rare book dealers for the author by placing her in contact with many of Gilkey’s victims. This is the perfect true crime book for book lovers, a morality play to remind even the most obsessed of us of the dangers of those obsessions.

David Howard: *Lost Rights: The Misadventures of a Stolen American Relic*. From Civil War battlefields to the hot lights of the Antiques Roadshow set to a true crime ending, Howard gives you a front row seat to the action. The Bill of Rights itself also becomes a character, and it shapes every scene it’s in

Travis McDade: *The Book Thief: The True Crimes of Daniel Spiegelman*. In the spring of 1994, Daniel Spiegelman shinnied up an abandoned book lift in Columbia University’s Butler Library, dismantled a wall, stole books, reassembled the wall, and snuck back down the shaft. Over a three-month period he did this more than a dozen times. He eventually escaped to Europe with roughly \$1.8 million in rare books, letters and manuscripts. Judge Kaplan, who tried him, redefined the value of such rare items and justified his sentencing by determining the value to be beyond the monetary realm.

Books about Mark Hofmann:

Simon Worrell: *The Poet & The Murderer*. The story of how how Mark Hofmann, America’s master forger came unstuck when he took on Emily Dickinson.

Robert Lindsey: *A Gathering of Saints*. This book answers questions such as how Mark Hofmann was able to fool almost all the document experts with his forgeries, why he decided to kill two people, and if he truly intended to forge the 116 lost pages of the *Book of Mormon*.

Steven Naifeh & Gregory White Smith: *The Mormon Murders*. A well-researched story of the infamous Mormon Murders case, wherein a fraudulent dealer in rare documents decided to kill off everyone who might reveal his deceptions.

Allen Dale Roberts & Linda Lillitoe: *Salamander: The Story of the Mormon Forgery Murders*. This book provides some insights into Utah culture, politics and religion which in fact overlap quite a bit. What is most extraordinary is that, despite two cold blooded murders, no one, except the police, seemed to want this case to go to trial!

George Throckmorton, R.C. Christensen, & Richard H. Casper: *Motive for Murder: The Bombs, The Mormons, and the Salamander*. The Hofmann investigation is here chronicled through the eyes of George Throckmorton, whose work as a forensic document examiner was instrumental in breaking the case.

RELATED READING LIST *(continued)*

Richard E. Turley, Jr.: **Victims: The LDS Church and the Mark Hofmann Case.** Turley, as a church historian, had access to documents and information not available to other writers on the subject, and is thus able to shed more light on the Hofmann affair from the perspective of the LDS church.

Other books on Forgers and Bibliomania:

Nicholas A. Basbanes: **A Gentle Madness: Bibliophiles, Bibliomanes, and the Eternal Passion for Books.** Basbanes addresses the passion for books from numerous standpoints, including through the stories of thieves and forgers like Stephen Blumberg. One of the best overall accounts of bibliomania.

Joseph Rosenblum: **Prince of Forgers.** Originally published in 1870 and now back in print, this fascinating book is a must-read for anyone interested in the history of literary forgeries, manuscripts, autographs and the drama of fools and scoundrels. It focuses on Vrain-Denis Lucas, who was sent to prison for forging and selling over 27,000 historical letters to many of France's leading collectors. The sensational trial exposed the most colossal literary fraud ever perpetrated.

W. Thomas Taylor & Larry McMurtry (introduction): **Texfake: An Account of the Theft and Forgery of Early Texas Printed Documents.** Taylor was instrumental in uncovering the forgeries and includes his own evidence, which made him suspect forgery; the book also gives an account of the related looting and reselling of items belonging to Texas libraries.

Joseph Rosenblum: **Practice to Deceive: The Incredible Story of Literary Forgery's Most Notorious Practitioners.** Author covers the motives and the methods used by nine talented if devious men, and provides extremely interesting and full of insights on the nature of authentication and the literary text.

John Collins: **Two Forgers, A Biography of Harry Buxton Forman and Thomas James Weaver.** The sensational exposure of book forgery by Thomas James Wise, disclosed in 1934 led to further discoveries, most notably that he had acted not alone but in collusion with Harry Buxton Forman, ranking this story as perhaps the most notorious literary scandal of this century.

Kenneth W. Rendell: **Forging History: The Detection of Fake Letters and Documents.** A contemporary and analytical treatment by a noted East Coast documents dealer.



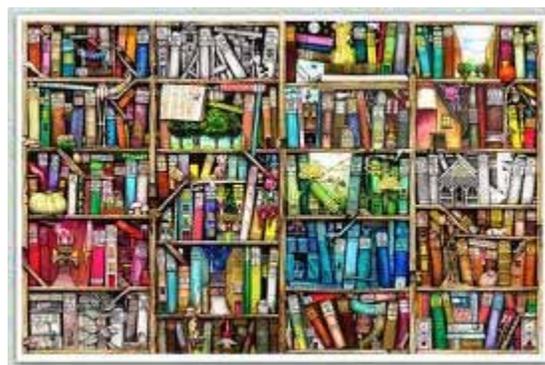
The Essentials

The question of which books belong in a small home library was warmly debated in early 20th-century America.

The Bible, a dictionary, an atlas and Shakespeare were almost universally prescribed. Dr. Charles Eliot, then president of Harvard University, said in 1909 that he could put together “five feet of books” — 25 books — that “will give any man the essentials of a liberal education” in 10 minutes a day. It included Goethe’s *Faust* and Adam Smith’s *Wealth of Nations*.

Charles Darwin’s *The Origin of Species* was in the “model library” of 500 books assembled by the St. Louis Public Library in 1921. “It provoked adverse comment,” reported a librarian in *The Library Journal*, with “several visitors declaring, ‘Books like that nobody reads, and why should they be in a private library?’ ”

Unsuitable books can corrupt a library — and its readers. In a 1916 copy of *The Journal of Home Economics*, young women were told, “Be sure to avoid immoral books — those which make a direct appeal to our lower nature.” If nothing else, don’t let them fall into innocent hands: “Lock up your Rabelais and perhaps even your Fielding, where little fingers may not happen upon them,” wrote Arthur Penn in *The Home Library*, published in 1883.



An Ideal Number

In the 1600s, the English diarist Samuel Pepys believed a gentleman should own exactly 3,000 books. In his library, books were numbered from the smallest size to the largest. To make the tops of the books even on the shelves, he built little wooden stilts for the short books, camouflaging the stilts to match the bindings.

Book Hunting Notes

Collecting Anthony Trollope



by **Bill Rich**

It was an early interest in book collecting that first brought my attention to Trollope. This was in the early 1970s, almost 40 years ago. At the time, Anthony Trollope (1815-1882) was little more than a name to me, a Victorian author I had never read. But, with my growing interest in collecting, I had picked up a copy of A. Edward Newton's *Amenities of Book Collecting*.

First published in 1918, this is a collection of essays written by an American businessman and book collector and a great amateur of books in the best sense of the word. This and Newton's later books, which are breezy and very readable, have now inspired several generations of American book collectors, myself included. *Amenities* reprinted the essay "A Great Victorian," which Newton first published in the *Atlantic* magazine.

The great Victorian was, of course, Trollope. Newton predicted that, in addition to Dickens and Thackeray, Trollope was the nineteenth century English novelist who would be remembered and become a classic. This was written only twenty-five years after Trollope's death, during a period when Trollope was in a decline but Newton led the charge on this side of the Atlantic to collect the novels in first editions.

My interest was sufficiently tweaked by Newton's puffs that I bought Heritage Press editions of Trollope's *The Warden* and *Barchester Towers* for few dollars. *The*

Warden is quite a short novel by mid-Victorian (and Trollope's) standards. It is a gentle tale of an aging English clergyman who is made to realize that his extremely well-paid lifetime appointment as the supervisor of an old men's home is a mere sinecure—the old men are few, all work is done by underlings, he has no real job for the money. In a crisis of conscience, he resigns his position, despite the genuine mutual love and regard among the warden and the old men.

That's all there is to it, in the way of plot and action—but, as Jack Matthews has pointed out, Trollope demonstrated his rare ability "to create a character that was perfectly credible, immensely subtle, of strong vitality, and morally decent."

I immediately went on to read *Barchester Towers*, which is in a sense a sequel to *The Warden*, with the same characters of the upper English clergy of the time, before reform, with their positions of privilege and power, with their worldly strivings, failings, and, again, with their definite virtues.



Old Anthony was a definite Type A personality—big, bluff, bewhiskered, and generous. The figure above is a somewhat flattering sepia sketch done when Trollope was in his 30s.

Barchester Towers is a much more ambitious and longer book than *The Warden*—it was first published in three volumes—but I couldn't put it down. From this time, I was a convinced Trollopean, buying book after book, often in paperback form (much, but definitely not all, of Trollope's huge output is available in modern reprints, even to this day).

Collecting Trollope in first editions is another matter, requiring patience and some expenditure these days. His first novel was published in 1847, and the last appeared in 1884, almost two years after his

death—a total of fifty-one works of fiction!

In addition, there were fourteen non-fiction books which include accounts of his many travels, sketches of English life, and an autobiography. While some of his books appeared in wrapped serial parts, most of the novels were published in two or three volumes, as their first book

edition form. This was the age of the “three-decker.” The lending libraries consumed most of this output and the books were literally read to death.

Trollope’s tremendous, high quality output becomes even more remarkable in view of the fact that for most of his career, novel writing was not his day job. As a young man, he received an appointment in the English civil service, and rose to become the third highest-ranking official in the British Post Office. An enormously efficient and conscientious civil servant, he was the inventor of the mail box (“pillar box” in England), which was rapidly adopted in much of the English-speaking world.

At the height of his popularity as a writer, he arranged to be awakened by his groom with a cup of coffee at five o’clock each morning. A half hour later, he would be at his writing desk, and devoted another half hour to going over the previous day’s output. He would then begin to write, one 250 word page every fifteen minutes, for a total of ten pages for that day—a total of three hours before breakfast—after which, he would leave for his job at the post office.

He kept this up for many years before his large income as a novelist permitted him to retire from the post office. The revelation in his posthumously-published autobiography of what he called this “mechanistic” method of producing his best-selling novels, certainly aided in the decline of his literary reputation. After all, what great literary artist could produce masterpieces in this hackwork fashion? But, he did.

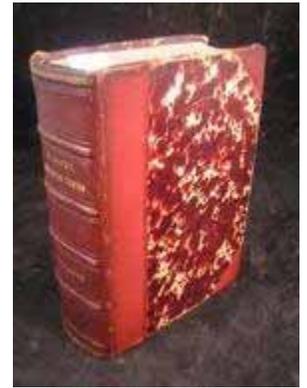
Old Anthony was a definite Type A personality—big, bluff, bewhiskered, and generous. The image shown on the previous page is a somewhat flattering sepia sketch done when Trollope was in his 30s. Most other photos, which were taken in later life, show the hair and whiskers very bushy and quite scraggly.

Trollope did become assiduously collected in the decades after World War I, not only by Newton and other wealthy collectors in America, such as Morris Parrish, but most famously by Michael Sadleir in Great Britain. Sadleir published the still-definitive Trollope bibliography in 1928, based on his essentially complete collection of Trollope’s works. His collection is now part of the



Trollope was the inventor of the mail box (“pillar box” in England), which was rapidly adopted in much of the English-speaking world.

The Warden is a gentle tale of an aging English clergyman who is made to realize that his extremely well-paid lifetime appointment as the supervisor of an old men’s home is a mere sinecure.



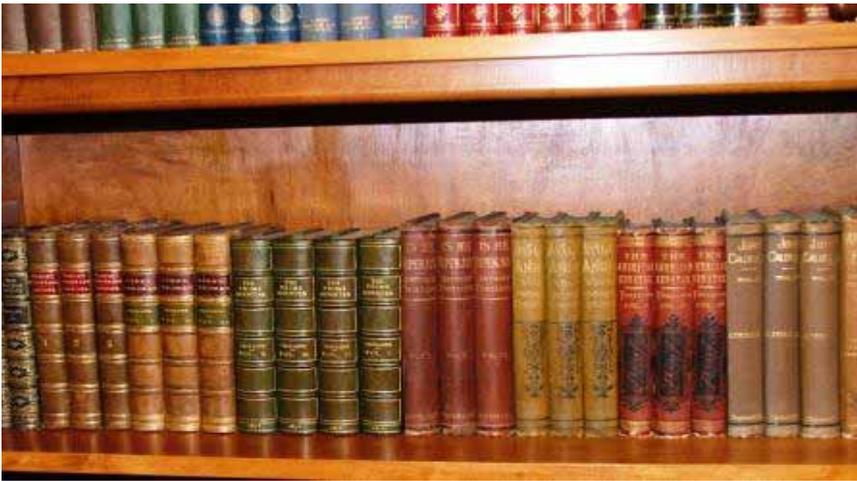
Parrish Collection at Princeton University. (Sadleir was the greatest collector of nineteenth century English fiction—the bulk of his spectacular collection of three-decker English firsts is a cornerstone of the rare book collection of UCLA.)

Trollope collecting is therefore a well-traveled path, taken by the masters, and a lot of water has gone over the dam since the great collections were formed. The standards set then were exacting, and are almost unattainable these days. First and foremost, the only acceptable collector’s copy had to be in the original publisher’s cloth bindings, and in very good, unfaded, unmarked condition. This immediately set the bar high, even in the times only thirty years after Trollope’s death.

We have mentioned that most of the firsts went to the lending libraries, and were read to destruction, or soon had to be rebound. Furthermore, the salvage drives in England of World War I saw many an old library copy collected for scrap paper. Then there was no one who so esteemed Trollope firsts for their literary value as to effect a rescue from the scrap pile.

Nevertheless, the great Trollope collections have adhered to the clean original condition standard. A rebound copy was beyond the pale. It is interesting that in the 1940 sale of A. Edward Newton’s collection in New York, out of a nice collection of Trollope firsts, each in original condition and in separate lots, only one lot was devoted to rebound copies. This lot contained dozens of firsts, all rebound in half morocco, a total of 134 separate volumes, and including some considerable rarities, even for those times.

Nevertheless, it was not considered worthwhile to list any of these separately. They were all lotted together—not because they were a set in occasionally shabby uniform half leather bindings, but, I believe, because they were rebound and hence much lesser copies.



Above is a photograph of some of the Trollope three-deckers on my shelves, contemporary bindings on the left, original cloth on the right. The four-decker is *The Prime Minister*.

While some of Newton's Trollopes were not in the greatest shape, the Parrish Collection at Princeton is the acme of collections in fine original condition. The books are displayed in an exact replica of the library room at Parrish's home, and are on constant display for any visitor to Princeton—the sight of rows of three-deckers, looking like they were published yesterday, is a mouth-watering vision for the initiated. Indeed, the term “Parrish condition” has come into the language of book collecting as a synonym for absolutely fine original state in nineteenth century first editions.

With all of this, collecting Trollope firsts today must be an exercise in reduced expectations for the collector of reasonably modest means. I have been at it for more than 30 years, beginning to acquire firsts in 1977.

Fortunately, the collector is now aided by the bibliography by Walter E. Smith, *Anthony Trollope: A Bibliography of His First American Editions, 1858 -1884* (Heritage Book Shop, 2003). This beautiful bibliography is everything that such a tool should be, with all states of the American firsts photographed in full page illustrations. I wish it had existed when I first began looking for American printings. It beautifully supplements Sadleir, who focused on the English firsts.

Summing up, with all of this, how have I done over the years? Reviewing my catalogs, I see there are now thirty-eight fiction firsts out of a theoretically possible fifty-one. Of these, thirty-five are first English editions, nine in the original cloth, three are first American, and there are fourteen additional first American printings for which I also have the first English. The Americans are all in original state. Finally, there are six out of a possible

fourteen of the non-fiction firsts, point of pride here going to the *Autobiography*, in two volumes.

The “acquisitions” catalogs, kept over the years, help to sort out where and when the books were obtained. While these records are not quite complete, I see that there are ten books from English dealers, seven from Canada, and the balance from U.S. dealers, with the exception of one bought at auction (Swann Galleries in New York), and one at the Friends of The Ohio State University Libraries annual sale. And, of course, there are favorite sources among these. In England, Jarndyce in London prevails. In the U.S., there are Sumner and Stillman in Maine, Brick Row in San Francisco and Heritage in Los Angeles.

And, quite significantly, a dealer in Brattleboro, Vermont. Until the day he died, he pronounced himself on his stenciled catalogs as “Ken Leach, Book Scout.” And scout he did—he must have covered every book barn in New England, at least—many of my American firsts came from him.

Finally, propinquity has played its part. We lived for many years near Buffalo, New York, and several books were bought from shops there. And Toronto being only an hour and a half drive away, many a happy Saturday was spent browsing the Toronto shops. Of these, David Mason Books was a major supplier—it was from him that I bought my first Trollope ever, *The Last Chronicle of Barset*, in two volumes, in 1977, and my first Trollope three-decker, *The Belton Estate*, in 1979.

Finally, I should answer the two usual questions for the collector: “Have you read them all?” and, “Do you read your first editions”? The answer to the first is almost all, even the ones I don't have in firsts. The exceptions to this are an early historical novel, *La Vendée* (French Revolution), which was definitely not Trollope's métier, and *The Bertrams*— with both of these, I have tried, but have been unable to complete them.

As to the second question, the answer is yes—the bindings are sound, and the print in these multi-volume firsts is large and well-spaced.

And the illustrations are a further delight. I show one of my favorites. From *Orley Farm*, this illustration shows a dejected Lady Mason after confessing (to forging a will in

favor of her son!). This is by Millais, who was Trollope's own favorite illustrator.

OK, so I am a Trollope fan. My collecting obviously cannot aspire to anything like completeness, but I am (reasonably) content. I conclude with the words of another Trollope enthusiast, no less than Leo Tolstoy, who, when he was writing *War and Peace*, entered this comment in his diary: "Trollope kills me with his virtuosity. I console myself that he has his skill and I have mine." At the time, Tolstoy was reading *The Bertrams*.

I really have to give this one another try.



Over these years, Bill has developed some standards for condition and state—such standards are necessary for any collector, but the pleasure of the hobby is that you can make the rules to suit yourself. For the Trollopes, here are Bill's:

1. Original, as-published state is preferred. Parts copies are outside my purview (see comment above on "reasonably modest means"). For cloth copies, extreme fading is unacceptable—spine lettering and any decoration must be legible and distinct. Chipping, tears to spine ends and tips are to be avoided, but reasonable restoration and repairs are acceptable.
2. Copies rebound near the time of publication ("contemporary binding") are quite acceptable. Usually such bindings are the half or quarter leather and marbled boards and gilt lettering that were standard for Victorian home libraries. Occasionally, full calf or morocco bindings were resorted to. In general, such bound copies are enormously attractive and redolent of the period.

Often there will be early book plates and/or inscriptions of owners of long ago—which, in my opinion, add to the charm, and are in no way a defect. Such copies usually sell for ten to thirty percent of the cost of the same edition in good original cloth. With these copies, omission of the half titles or advertising leaves was common, and this is OK with me.

Damaged or badly rubbed bindings are not admissible, as are copies with significant foxing or staining of the leaves.

3. In later years, copies have been rebound in morocco or full calf bindings, gilt decoration, top edges gilded. This has often been the case when the original bindings had deteriorated to the point where no one would want them. By the time when Trollope firsts were esteemed, a full works rebind was worth the effort. Some such copies will sometimes have the original cloth covers bound in at the end. This collector has no objection whatsoever to such beautiful things.

4. Copies in any modern cloth, buckram, or otherwise period-inappropriate modern paste-ups are to be scorned, as also is the case for any ex-public library or institutional library copy, particularly those with external markings indicating their sordid earlier life.

5. There is no need to be a fanatic about issue and state. First issue, first state are preferred if they can be had, but later issues are OK if needs be. I am not even adverse to a later printing in the original issue format, on occasion.

I like the first American printings when I can get them. Collecting such widens the search opportunities on this side of the Atlantic, and I have been able to find many of these in very good original cloth or original paper wrappers, although the prices have gone way up in recent years.



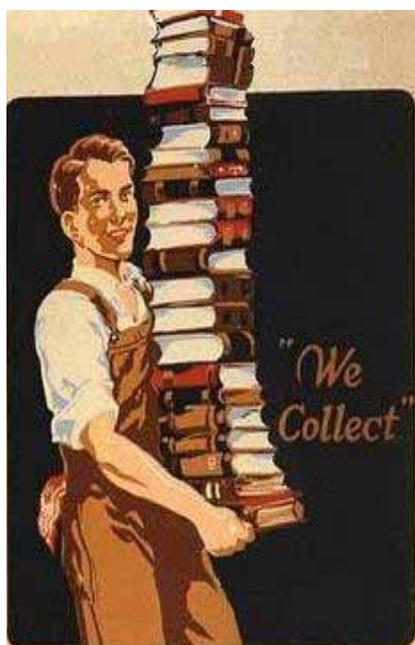
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UPCOMING BOOK EVENTS



February 20 - March 6: Friends of the Upper Arlington Library Book Sale. Begins at 1 p.m. on Sunday Feb 20 and continues during regular library hours

March 10 - 13: Old Worthington Library Book Sale. Friends-only preview sale from 7-9 p.m. on Thursday evening, March 10. Sale is open to the public during library hours on Saturday and Sunday

March 11 - 13: Grandview Library Friends Sale. Friends-only preview from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. Friday evening March 11. Sale open to the public during library hours on Saturday and Sunday.

April 22 - 23: NOBS 29th Annual Book Fair will be held on Friday from 3 - 8:30 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. More information can be found at www.nobs.nobsweb.org

May 7: Ohioana Book Festival. Time, events and NEW LOCATION can be found at www.ohioanabookfestival.org closer to the date of the festival