



Aldus Society Notes

Winter 2005-2006

Volume 6, No. 2

J.K. Lilly: Collector Extraordinaire

At November's meeting Joel Silver, Curator of Books at Indiana University's Lilly Library and columnist for *Fine Books & Collections* magazine, joined us for a presentation about J.K. Lilly.

J. K. Lilly was a collector most of his life. From the mid-1920s until his death, he devoted a great deal of his leisure time to building his collections of books and manuscripts, works of art, coins, stamps, military miniatures, firearms and edged weapons, and nautical models. Lilly's collections of books and manuscripts, totaling more than 20,000 books and 17,000 manuscripts, together with more than fifty oil paintings and 300 prints, were given by the collector to Indiana University between 1954 and 1957. These materials form the foundation of the rare book and manuscript collections of the Lilly Library.

Joel's well-received presentation was accompanied by numerous images of items from the Lilly collections.



Joel Silver, Curator of Books
at the Lilly Library
(Image by George Cowmeadow Bauman)



Foxe's Book of Martyrs



On October 13th, John King, Distinguished University Professor, Humanities Distinguished Professor of English & Religious Studies at the Ohio State University spoke on John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments of the English Martyrs* (popularly known as the *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*).

His presentation was accompanied by numerous slides drawing from the rich images and textual variations in the multiple editions of that most famous of books.



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 ☞

Aldus Calendar

January

7 (First Saturday) — Just 10 days before his 300th birthday the Saturday session will feature an item Benjamin Franklin worked on as a printer in London, work from the Franklin press in Philadelphia, the first Autobiography and associated items.

12 (Regular Meeting) — Harry Campbell, Book Conservator for the Ohio State University Libraries, will be talking about "This Old Book," a review of the history and development of the mechanical and material aspects of the book. Harry's presentation will be enhanced by the presence of a variety of material, tool, and book samples.

February

4 (First Saturday) — February's program will feature African-American holdings in commemoration of Black History month.

9 (Regular Meeting) — Bob Tauber and Sidney Chafetz will discuss their experiences reviving the Logan Elm Press at the Ohio State University. The Logan Elm Press imprint flourished at OSU for almost fifteen years, but was closed in 1995 as a result of program reductions at the University. Its revival is now on track and several fine press offerings have been issued or are in the planning stage.

March

4 (First Saturday) — The March installment will focus on OSU's Irish materials in appreciation of St. Patrick's Day later in the month.

9 (Regular Meeting) — Michael Zwettler, Associate Professor of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures at the Ohio State University, will present the eighth chapter of the Aldus Society History of Text & Image series when he speaks on early Arabic manuscripts.

April

13 (Regular Meeting) — Owen Gingerich, senior astronomer emeritus at the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory and research professor of astronomy and of the history of science at Harvard University, will tell his saga of *The Book Nobody Read*, his 30-year search to record all the first and second editions of Nicholas Copernicus' *De Revolutionibus Orbium Coelestium*.

May

11 (Regular Meeting) — To be announced.



The Aldus Society

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A Simple Thank You

Ron Ravneberg

"In nature the bird who gets up earliest catches the most worms, but in book-collecting the prizes fall to birds who know worms when they see them."

Michael Sadleir

The Colophon, Number 3, 1930

For me, there's no question; the Aldus Society is definitely a worm – a real prize for this bird. I have been hooked on the Aldus Society ever since I first heard of the organization nearly six years ago. It's a special organization, but I'm not sure that everyone realizes just how special the Aldus Society is. For me, a couple of things stand out.

We're diverse; there's no single description of an Aldus Society member. Some of us are book collectors, but others aren't. Some like books as artifacts while others care only about the content. Some of us are booksellers, scholars, educators, librarians and printers. But most of us are involved in vocations not related to books. We're exactly what we claim to be: A Columbus Society for Lovers of Books and the Printed Arts.

We're an inclusive group; we have no special membership requirements and we regularly get 40-50 people at our meetings. That may not be remarkable for some clubs and organizations, but for a book group in a medium-sized city it's quite unusual. (I recently spoke to a book collector in Montreal and he noted that they have difficulty getting more than five people at their dinner gatherings.)

We're a great group and we're getting better.

Geoff Smith, Aldus Society founder and President for the organization's first three years, did much of the heavy lifting to get the organization going. He laid the foundation for the group and without his guidance there would be no Aldus Society. But like the poker player who knows when to hold and when to fold, Geoff also knew when to step away from the table. He understood that the best way to keep an organization vibrant was to infuse it with new ideas and people on a regular basis. So after three years at the helm he decided to turn the leadership of the organization over to others.

That's where I came in. For the past three years I have had the pleasure of serving the Aldus Society as its President. During that time we've created a framework atop the foundation laid in the early years by establishing a regular meeting site, maintaining our diverse and informative programming, co-sponsoring a major book gathering, taking field trips, and continuing to uphold the purpose outlined in our by-laws:

The Aldus Society exists for the edification and continuing education of its members, the perpetuation of book arts and the dissemination of knowledge. The Society fosters an interest in the historical, aesthetic, physical and cultural aspects of books, manuscripts and other original textual and graphic materials. The Society also strives to cooperate in community events that promote its purpose and to participate in the activities of similar clubs and societies throughout the nation.

I've enjoyed the job thoroughly. However, I've learned many things from Geoff over the past few years, and his lesson of change is not the least of them. Therefore, I plan to step down as President of the Aldus Society when my current term expires in March.

Foundation first, framework next, and then ... what?

It's time for the next team. The Aldus Society has continued to evolve and the job for the next few years will be to broaden our base and begin to build upon the foundation and framework that are now in place. Interested in helping? Just contact me and we'll get you involved.

In the past I've used the pages of *Aldus Society Notes* to wax philosophically about various book-related topics, but in this issue my message is a simple thank you – to Geoff, to the Trustees (who do the real work), and to the membership at large.

Thanks for giving me the opportunity to help the Aldus Society succeed.



Barry Moser Supports OSU Library Renovation with Don Quixote Print



Artist and author, Barry Moser has generously donated his time and talent to create a special printed edition of his image of *Don Quixote* in support of the Thompson Library Renovation.

Moser, whom Nicholas Basbanes calls “the most important book illustrator working in America today,” was hosted by the Aldus Society and the Friends of the OSU Libraries when he was featured speaker at our 2004 *Celebration of the Book* in Columbus. It was during his visit that Barry offered to authorize an edition to help with the renovation project.

The image, which has never before been the subject of a printed edition, was released at the end of 2005 to coincide with the 400th anniversary of the publication of the first part of *Don Quixote de la Mancha* by Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra. The Talfourd P. Lynn Cervantes collection in OSU’s Rare Books and Manuscripts Library is one of the world’s most significant collections of publications by Cervantes, and includes a copy of the extremely rare first 1605 Madrid printing of *Don Quixote*.

Moser’s *Don Quixote* is printed on Mohawk Letterpress Superfine, off-white, eggshell finish 80# stock. The print size is approximately 12.5" x 19" and the centered image is approximately 8" x 12.5".

The print is be available in a signed and numbered edition of 100 prints at \$250 each. An additional 125 unsigned prints are available for \$150 each. Both versions are available exclusively through the Aldus Society and the Friends of the OSU Libraries.

If you are interested in acquiring one or more print(s), please contact the Aldus Society at (614) 457-1153 or at **AldusSociety@aol.com**. You can also contact Friends of the OSU Libraries office at (614) 292-3387. Proceeds from the prints will benefit the Thompson Library Renovation Campaign.



Don Quixote de la Mancha and his faithful horse Rocinante, a limited edition print by Barry Moser, available exclusively through the Aldus Society and the Friends of the Ohio State University Libraries. All proceeds will benefit the renovation of OSU's Thompson Library.



A True Disney Christmas: A “Bookstore-y”

George Cowmeadow Bauman
Co-owner, The Acorn Bookshop

Most Saturdays in our shop are a little on the busy side, filled with browsers and buyers and characters. Some days it's all we can do to talk with them, ring them up, and welcome incoming readers to Booktopia. Restocking and re-searching can wait till Tuesdays.

In December the antiquarian bookshops in town are wonderfully busy, bookbuyers joyful to have a booking experience as a comforting alternative to the mall crush. They come to not only check off names on a list but also to give themselves the gift of bookstore-browsing.

Folks who give books as holiday presents are sharing more than a recommended book with the person who unwraps the familiar book-shaped package; they're passing on an even more precious present – the joy of reading and the pleasure of owning books.

During the holidays the antiquarian bookshops in town welcome more customers than usual, though we don't have the holiday spike that many big-box stores do, the ones that depend upon under-the-Christmas-tree gifts for 25% or more of their annual sales. And there's no one waiting the day after Thanksgiving for us to open at 5am.

The last Saturday before Christmas is Acorn's treat day when we lay out complimentary holiday refreshments for our loyal customers, as our way of saying thanks for keeping the book-devouring wolf – lupus bibliophagae? – from the door.

Last year, I worked in the shop until midnight getting everything ready, enjoying the anticipation of the day when Christine and I say thanks and “Merry Christmas” to the folks that make it possible for me to be living my life's dream. I played loud Christmas music to keep me moving as the hour got later. We have a big-band CD titled “Christmas in the '40s” that was a perfect companion as I imagined all the folks that were going to be making yummy sounds over the refreshments as they were working their gift lists.

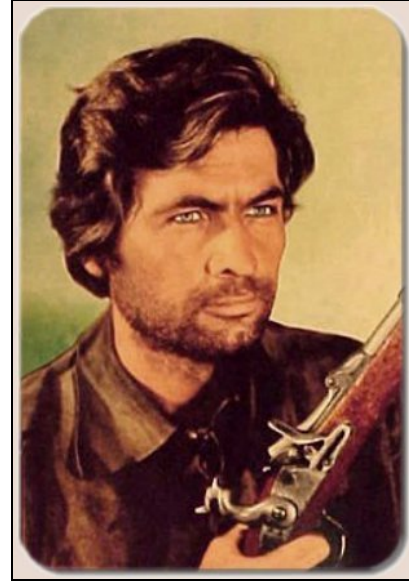
At opening time, all was ready – Christine and I wearing holiday colors, though I had decided against wearing my Santa shorts outside my pants, as I have been known to do on past occasions. The goodies were arrayed by the side door, the scent of hot coffee welcoming folks on a cold day. Johnny Mathis was “walking through a Winter Wonderland.”

Among the customers that Christmas Saturday was a well-dressed older woman with sparkling eyes and heavy-henna'd eyebrows. Holding out a piece of paper, she approached me as I was exiting the backroom with a book I'd retrieved from downstairs for another customer.

“Excuse me, sir,” she began in a quiet and almost formal

voice, “but I would like to ask you if you have a copy of this book.” She reached out with arthritis-gnarled hands to hand me a Barnes & Noble printout regarding THE DAVY CROCKETT CRAZE: A LOOK AT THE 1950s.

Whoa! I stepped back and took another look at this slight woman who had just rung my bell by invoking the name of one of my heroes.



She smiled a little more at my reaction, and said, “Yes, I thought you might be of that age,” having instantly understood my hero-worship reaction.

“I know that I can get it new on Amazon,” she patiently explained, “but my funds are limited and I'm trying to find a used copy and also to support a local business.”

I told her that I knew for certain that we didn't have the book, for if we did, I would have taken it home.

“I'm not surprised,” she replied with such a twinkle in her eyes. “But would you tell me where I could find this book?”

I slipped back to the office through aisle-browsers to check online for her, but found only one available copy – in Germany for \$36 + international shipping.

“I'm afraid I'll just have to buy a new copy,” she sighed with resignation.

I knew there had to be a story in her about this interest, so I introduced myself, and asked her.

As Mannheim Steamroller Christmas music played in the background, she gently but firmly shook my proffered hand and introduced herself.

“With your obvious interest in Davy Crockett, you must remember the movies that Walt Disney made for TV back in the mid-50s?” she began, her voice not very strong, but with intensity of memory beaming from her eyes.

I nodded that I did.

She glanced around to see if anyone were listening, as though she was about to pass the secret of the Holy Grail on

to me. She said in a low voice, "I was the Assistant Production Manager on the film." To explain her wanting to keep our conversation private, she added, "I don't tell anyone, because I don't want to be presumptuous."

"What does an assistant Production Manager do?" I asked, wanting her to continue.

She laughed, "Mostly getting everyone everywhere they were supposed to be and doing it on time!"

"I was living in Tennessee, and they called me anytime they did any filming there, which was quite often."

"Of course," I interjected. "Since Davy was from Tennessee, it would be only right to film in 'The Land of the Free.'"

"Yes!" she exclaimed. "Mr. Disney insisted on everything being historically accurate, so there was always an historian on the set. And Mr. Disney was also there much of the time himself." She paused to remember something – which she did frequently during our conversation. I didn't rush her despite snacking customers swirling around us, knowing that she was enjoying the conversation and the revisitation of treasured memories. Christine had noted my involvement and was taking care of others.

"Do you know the reporter Campbell Brown?" she asked me, after a moment or two.

"The one who works for NBC and appears on 'The Today Show' sometimes?"

"Yes, she's the one. Well, her father was a noted historian. He was the man who Mr. Disney hired to make sure that our movies didn't stray from accuracy."

Oh, the things you learn when talking with customers.

"How did you like working with Fess Parker and Buddy Ebsen?" I asked, recognizing that she needed prompting. Her age and her modesty kept her from a coherent narrative flow.

She gave me a movie-star's smile and gushed, "Fess and Buddy were as genuine as you can imagine! They were almost like the characters they played, in terms of character."

"I remember so much about the Davy Crockett movies," I said, "but especially Davy's friend. Buddy Ebsen's character was named Georgie Russell!" She smiled with me, and I explained that I remembered his name partly because I had the same first name, though it's been a long time since anyone called me Georgie.

"But most of the attention was on Fess Parker," I recalled. "A lot of us boys back then had coonskin caps." Which had caused a huge jump in the price of wholesale raccoon pelts, and, one would believe, a serious decline in the raccoon population.

"Children followed Fess everywhere he appeared," she said. "There were enormous crowds when he would visit a town to promote the movies. He handled the fame with grace."

Another of her pauses, and then, "All the adulation did catch him and many of us by surprise."

"Why was that?" I asked, stepping in to give her a momentary pause. It was clear that her frailness didn't experience this trip down memory lane too often.

"Oh, no one was pleased at the end of filming," she explained. "They didn't think much of the film. But I did! I knew it was going to be popular. How could it not be a hit, with someone as engaging as Fess and a good story that was based on historical truths which showed how good character would always win out?"

I agreed with her that it was one of the biggest hits of the time, "Or you wouldn't be asking me for a book called *THE DAVY CROCKETT CRAZE!*"

She chuckled in agreement, and went on.

"Mr. Disney wanted his stars to be very genuine with high moral standards. And Fess fit the bill perfectly."

"Didn't Ebsen pass on in the last year or two?" I asked.

"Yes, he did," she replied, lowering her eyes. "I kept in touch with Fess and Buddy until five or ten years ago," she said, looking back up at me.

I could see she was tiring, though I wanted to continue to ask her question after question about her experiences with "Davy Crockett."

As though she read my thoughts, she began wrapping up the conversation by giving the printout a shake and saying, "Next year is the 50th anniversary of the 'Davy Crockett' movies, and the Disney people are having a reunion for us. I want to see what this book has to say about those days. It was such a different time for this country. 'Davy Crockett' became as popular as it did because we needed heroes back then."

She paused as perfectly as a Hollywood director might have coached her, and then added in conclusion, "And I think we need them even more today."

That last Saturday before Christmas turned out to be a very good one for us at the cash register, in customer service, and in the richness of the day's experiences. Among many interesting customer interactions, I had shaken the hand that had shaken the hand of Davy Crockett.

Her visit just before Christmas reminds us all to focus not on the gifts we find beneath the tree – even if they are books, but on the gift of our hearts and minds and memory, that we can feel joy and love and compassion for others, and be able to think of ways to live our lives to express that compassion, that love, and that joy.

Just as Mr. Disney would have wanted.

Merry Christmas.



*The Ohio State University Libraries Logan Elm Press
announces a limited edition of the
“Apology for Printers”
to be published on the occasion of
The Benjamin Franklin Tercentenary 1706-2006*



BENJAMIN FRANKLIN’S short essay on the importance of a free marketplace of ideas first appeared in his *Pennsylvania Gazette* on June 10, 1731. ¶ This Logan Elm Press edition, with

an introduction by Peter Givler, Executive Director of the Association of American University Presses, is accompanied by a multicolor reduction woodcut portrait of Franklin by Sidney Chafetz, OSU Professor Emeritus of Art. ¶ Peter Givler writes and lectures on the world of

scholarly publishing and the stresses and opportunities created by the new communications technologies. ¶ Sidney Chafetz

has produced an internationally acclaimed body of work as a printmaker that includes numerous portraits of authors and cultural icons. His multicolor reduction woodcut portrait of Franklin for this edition was printed by cutting away portions of the woodblock’s surface after each color was printed, repeating this process of cutting and printing until almost none of the woodblock’s surface remained. ¶ The text was composed in Langston Caslon 337, the closest version to Franklin’s types, and printed on a Vandercook Proofing Press on Rives Heavyweight mouldmade paper off photopolymer plates.

¶ Limited to 150 numbered and signed copies, the edition will be handsewn into a non-adhesive self-wrapped structure of Hahnemühle Bugra and Zerkall papers over boards, and will be available in January 2006, priced at \$250.00 per copy.

¶ Included with each copy is a separate Broadside of Franklin looking over a freshly printed sheet. ¶ Copies can be ordered before January 31, 2006 at the pre-publication price of \$125.00, which includes Ohio sales tax & insured shipping. ¶ To reserve your copy(s) now at the pre-publication price, please send a check, or a purchase order, made out to OSU Libraries Logan Elm Press, Attn: Robert Tauber, 1858 Neil Avenue Mall, Room 011, Columbus, OH 43210-1286. ¶ For further information, please contact: tauber.1@osu.edu or phone: (614) 688-3973.



Book Hunting Notes

Bill Rich

“Provenance” is defined by John Carter in his *ABC for Book Collectors* as “the pedigree of a book’s previous ownership.” In collecting older literary first editions, it is not uncommon to find evidence of a book’s previous ownership, usually in the form of a book plate or book label placed, typically, on the front pastedown. I believe that such indications of a book’s history should be regarded as positive, enriching notes in collecting. The listing of bookplates and other marks of ownership among a book’s faults, in the same category as, for example, fading of the backstrip or dust jacket tears, is a conceit of some collectors and dealers in modern first editions. This tendency to denigrate bookplates or well-placed, neat signatures and inscriptions as faults should be fought by all of us (making exceptions, of course, for particularly hideous examples of bookplate design).

In my own collecting, I occasionally find books with a more or less distinguished provenance. None of these books was acquired because of their provenance, but it is a special joy to have a book that was owned by a great collector – it’s heart-warming, in a way impossible to explain. Here are four examples from books once owned by collectors in the great days of American book collecting – what Nicholas Basbanes calls the “Brandy for Heroes” era, the period of about 30 years on either side of 1900, ending with the stock market crash of 1929. The illustrations show the small leather book labels that appear in these books.

Robert Hoe (1839-1909)

This particular label is in a copy of *Roderick Random* by Tobias Smollett, 2 vols., London, 1748. Robert Hoe’s grandfather had invented the rotary, steam-driven press, and the family business supplied the world with such presses. Indeed, the book label shows, fittingly, a printing



press, albeit a traditional flat bed press a la Gutenberg, rather than the rotary that made the family fortune. Hoe amassed the largest private library yet seen in America, the 15,000 books being sold in a series of auctions in New York in 1911-12. A leader in the highest strata of bibliophilia, Hoe with several other NYC magnates founded the Grolier Club, which remains the premier U.S. bibliophilic society. Another activity of the club was to establish a bindery, to make available fine binding in the U.S. to equal what was available in England and continental Europe. For this purpose, expert French binders were encouraged to come to New York, and, for a few years, some fine “Club” bindings were produced. My *Roderick Random* is an example of such a Club binding, the volumes bound in full crushed red levant morocco, and, in minute gold letters on the lower dentelles, the binders’ label states “Club Bindery, 1903.” It is interesting that these books, owned by a

collector of essentially unlimited resources, are still not what present tastes would favor. Both volumes are, of course, of the first state of the first printing of this early English novel. But the second edition was distinguished by having engraved frontispieces by a well-respected artist/engraver pair, F. Hayman and C. Grignion. Hoe evidently wanted these in his book, also. Therefore, in the rebinding by the Club bindery, these frontispieces from a copy of the second edition were bound in. So, probably, the original calf bindings of the first edition were discarded and a copy of the second edition was rendered imperfect, in order to satisfy the collector. The result is a glorious 2-vol. set, which I prize mightily. Nevertheless, at least two canons of present-day book collecting were presumably violated: the emphasis on original state, and the dictum against breaking up valuable copies of books. Another facet of these particular volumes is that they provide a caution against regarding all rare books as possible investments. Smollett has not held the attention of literature collectors over the years. I see that I paid \$300 for this novel in 1973; the catalog of the Hoe auction sales show that these same copies sold in 1912 for \$70, quite a price then. Over the same span of years, the buying power of the dollar increased approximately five times; in constant dollars, these books brought slightly less in 1973 than they did in 1912. Nor have the intervening years since 1973 made my putative “investment” look much better. Many of the lesser Hoe books have filtered out into the general rare book population in the 95 years since the sale, and still appear in dealers’ catalogs. A few years ago, other Smollett first editions from the Hoe library appeared in the catalog of a West Coast dealer. From the catalog description, these received the same Club binding of red morocco, gilt, as did my *Roderick Random*. Hoe must have enjoyed clothing some of his literary favorites in this quietly beautiful, uniform style. Well, the price asked was an advance over inflation – but nowhere near what one would have enjoyed if the original auction price had been spent on, say, GE stock. And, both from the West Coast dealer and the dealer who sold my copy, the bulk of the price was definitely due to the fine binding – Smollett first editions, as such, don’t command too much of a premium. Again, tastes were different in 1912.

John Pierpont Morgan (1837-1913)

The Morgan book label is in a copy of W.M. Thackeray’s *The Virginians* in the original 24 yellow-wrapped parts, published in London in monthly installments, 1857 -1859. The set is in two cloth boxes, each group of 12 being wrapped in a cloth folder – a “chemise” in bibliophilic parlance – and then placed into the boxes. The labels are on the



inside of the chemises. This book came from the famous Seven Gables Book Shop in New York, shortly before the business was wound up following the deaths of its owners. This was the first and only time I visited Seven Gables, and

there were bargains to be had – if only I had known or realized all that I was seeing. But I did manage this Thackeray 1st edition. It was one of the first Victorian novels in parts that I had ever bought, and God knows, part of the lesser canon of Thackeray's works. Indeed, it was recognized as something of a dog when it was first published, despite the overwhelming popularity of Thackeray at the time. The story is that, shortly after publication, Thackeray had heard that one of his friends had sharply criticized the novel. Running into the friend on the street, Thackeray called him on this, saying "Did I hear that you have said that the "Virginians" is the worst novel I have ever written?!" The friend resolutely denied this:

"No, no, not at all. What I actually said was that it is the worst novel *anybody* has ever written." I don't know Thackeray's response to this.

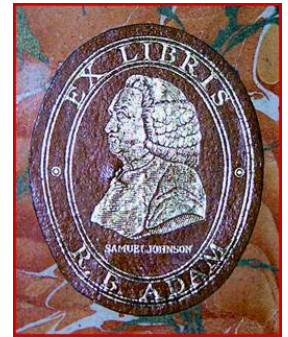
While Thackeray has not had quite as great a literary eclipse as Smollett, he no longer has the status, comparable to Dickens, which he enjoyed in his later lifetime. Today, his novels in parts can be obtained for perhaps a third of the price of Dickens' novels in parts; the great exception to this being, of course, *Vanity Fair*, the undisputed Thackeray high spot. My copy of *The Virginians* looks in good shape, and one wonders how many of these parts were read. But, a further question is how did a Morgan library copy get on the open market at all? Unlike the Hoe books, the Morgan library was never dispersed, but was left to the public, and now occupies the spectacular building in Manhattan that is a place of pilgrimage for many book lovers. I don't know how a copy with the Morgan bookplate appeared for sale at Seven Gables, but there can be reasonable speculation. Many (most?) rare book libraries will sell off books that are deemed not essential to the main mission of the collection. These will include books outside core collection areas, or, simply, "duplicates." For example, several years ago, books from the famous Huntington Library appeared, as such, in the catalogs of some California dealers. My copy of Trollope's *Barchester Towers* is such a book, with a small Huntington deaccession stamp on the back end paper of each volume. For my copy of *The Virginians* also, I vote for the "duplicates" idea. The Morgan owns Thackeray's original manuscript for this novel. For all I know, they may own a presentation copy of the parts, as well. So perhaps they parted with a lesser (for them) copy. But the bookplates certainly suggest the book formed a part of J.P.'s library for some period of time.

Finally, it is just possible to make out the House of Morgan motto on the book label: "Onward and Upward." Now this may be a motto adopted in all seriousness, back in the great days of robber baron capitalism. But many of us have admired the beautiful allegorical Renaissance tapestry that is over the fireplace in the main reading room of the Morgan Library. This was chosen by J.P. himself, and is titled, appropriately for such a setting, "The Triumph of Avarice." I can't help but feel that the man, whose highly developed sense of irony led him to choose this particular tapestry,

might also have had his tongue in his cheek when he put the "Onward and Upward" motto on his bookplate.

Robert B. Adam (?-1940)

I have more than one example of the book label of "R.B." Adam, as he was always known. This is a consequence of my having lived (and collected books) in the Buffalo, New York area for twenty years. R.B. Adam was the adopted son of one of the great mercantile families of Buffalo, during its glory years as a leading American industrial and commercial city. Even during my years there, Adam, Meldrum, & Anderson was the leading department store chain, though commercial dominance had long since left the town. But the Adam name was famous far beyond its mercantile prominence: R.B. Adam was one of the greatest American book collectors of the early 20th century. He had a great Robert Burns collection (reflecting his Scottish birth), and one of the most important Ruskin collections. But, his collection of the works of Samuel Johnson and his circle was without parallel. The Adam book label, it will be seen, is a portrait of Johnson.



Adam's books, with his bookplate, have had various fates. Some were auctioned. The Ruskin collection was given to Yale University. The Burns collection was sold as early as 1924 to Rosenbach for the then princely sum of \$41,437.50 – how the odd dollars and cents came into the transaction, I don't know, but this was not untypical of Rosenbach. The good doctor actually had trouble in raising the money to pay R. B., but finally managed, after selling off a few choice items. The bulk of the collection, however, remained with Rosenbachs, where it is now a major feature of the Rosenbach Foundation collection in Philadelphia.

Financial trouble came to R.B., as it did to many American millionaires, with the '29 crash and subsequent depression. He offered the Johnson collection to Yale University – this time, not as a gift, but at a sale price of \$1.5 million. This was too steep even for Yale in those bad times, and they declined. R.B. managed to recoup the situation by using the collection as collateral for a \$1 million bank loan for his business. The collection stayed in a Rochester, NY bank vault, and the firm of Adam, Meldrum and Anderson weathered the depression. In 1948, several years after Adams' death, the loan having been paid, the collection was sold by R.B.'s son to the renowned husband/wife book collector team of Mary and Donald Hyde (for a mere \$75,000). Recently, following Mary Hyde's death, the collection was given to Harvard University.

Despite the many eventual institutional destinies for R.B. Adam books, there still remained some around Western New York when I was living there. The label shown is in a

beautifully bound first edition of Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, London, 1850. Another one appears in a copy of A. Edward Newton's *End Papers*, with a gift inscription to a young friend from R.B., dated the year before his death.

I have acquired books from the libraries of other great Buffalo collectors, F. Conger Goodyear and John Clawson, for example. But I prize the R.B. Adam ones the most – a great collector, who once used his collection to stave off financial disaster – a story I have more than once recounted to my sometimes skeptical spouse.

Chauncey Brewster Tinker (1876-1963)

Tinker is the only academic among these men of business. He was longtime Professor of English at Yale, where his classes on literature inspired more than one generation of rich men's sons to become book collectors. "Tink," as he was called, was not without resources himself to play what his close friend, A. Edward Newton, called "this book-collecting game." He was in the big league of the "brandy for heroes" era, although, perhaps, not quite on the scale of his circle of close friends, which included, besides Newton, R.B. Adam, Frank Hogan, and the redoubtable Dr. Rosenbach himself. Brewster, too, was a Johnsonian – but his interests ranged widely, including the 19th century poets, and the works of William Blake. The bulk of Tinker's collections is now at Yale, but, again, copies of books with his label do appear on the market. The label shown is in a book bought here in Columbus, from Penguin Books, back in the days when they had an open shop. The book is a first edition Matthew Arnold, *Passages from the Prose Writings*, London, 1880. An extremely minor Matthew Arnold work, to be sure, but offered at only a slight advance over the used book price – a small premium because of the label, which I was glad to pay, and I collect Matthew Arnold anyway.

Summing up, I should note that the book labels shown here are very small – not one is as much as an inch across. Someone once pointed out that the size of the book plate is in inverse proportion to the quality of a book collection. I believe this to be almost universally true, and these small, fine labels are testimony to this truth.



Who Could Ask for More?

Samuel Pepys (1633-1703)

I have enough of my own to buy me a good book and a good fiddle, and I have a good wife.

February 18, 1668



A Plethora of Private Presses

Marcia Preston

New Castle, Delaware, on the first weekend of October, is the place to be for lovers of finely printed, limited edition books. More than forty owners of private presses gather annually to show their latest editions at a Bookfest sponsored by Oak Knoll Rare Books.

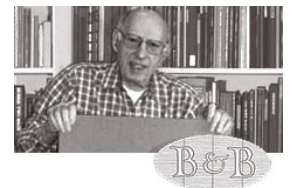


This year my nephew, a fellow bibliophile, and I met at the Philadelphia airport and drove down to New Castle to begin a weekend of immersion in the world of books and book people. Being in a quiet village founded in

1651 with its lovely historic houses and cobblestone streets added to the feeling of having left the real world.

On Saturday morning everyone gathered at the original Quaker Meeting House to hear Joel Silver speak on the History of the Leaf Book. I was happy to tell him we would meet again at the November Aldus meeting when he would be the speaker. The theme of this year's Fest came from the Caxton Club's recent exhibit and catalog *Disbound and Dispersed, the Leaf Book Considered*.

After a quick lunch and a visit to the Oak Knoll bookstore, where everything was 20% off, we walked to the school where owners of private presses were displaying their books. For over three hours we viewed and admired dozens of books and chatted with those who had made them. It was a treat to talk to friends from England from whom I have ordered books since meeting them at an earlier Fest. I enjoyed finally meeting Henry Morris of the Bird and Bull Press, considered by some to be the "godfather" of the contemporary printers because of the longevity of his Press and his fine quality books. And, yes, I bought one of his books which he inscribed. Presses from Russia, France, Canada and Wales were new to me. And I had come 400 miles to meet Bob Baris of Carrolton, Ohio, who has the excellent Press on Scroll Road which I plan to visit next year.



On Sunday morning we heard a panel discussion of The Practical and Ethical Side of the Leaf Book. Joel Silver moderated a panel of two Press owners, a curator of rare books, and the President of the Caxton Club. It was agreed a complete book should never be broken, but one page missing makes a book incomplete.

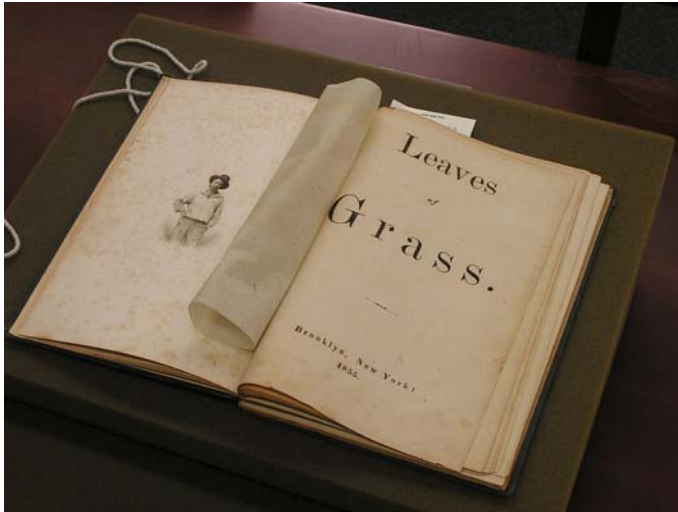
After another visit to the bookstore and a brief walk-through of the exhibit, it was time to return regretfully to the real world. May all booklovers experience one of these enjoyable weekends in New Castle. There is no charge and no registration. Just go.



First Saturday Recap

Geoff Smith

It was a hectic autumn for First Saturday programs. In fact, with all the OSU Football home games, it was hard to schedule events on the first Saturday of each month. (September, for instance, was completely unavailable.)



October – The October First Saturday program featured works of Walt Whitman, particularly the 1855 *Leaves of Grass*, in commemoration of the sesquicentennial of the publication of that great work.

November – November's program was actually in October also, when cookbooks from the Peter D. Franklin Cookbook Collection of the Rare Books and Manuscripts Library were featured. The guest presenter was Diana Brit-Franklin, cookbook authority, who spoke about collecting cookbooks.



December – December's program featured recently received drawings by James Thurber, the vast majority being previously unpublished. Considering that December is Thurber's birthday month, it seemed an appropriate display for the month.

Aldus members and guests are welcome to attend any and all First Saturday programs. The sessions, wherein members are invited to the OSU Rare Books and Manuscripts Reading Room to view and discuss several books selected from the OSU collection, are designed to provide attendees with an opportunity to explore books in relative depth with commentary by a subject specialist. First Saturdays are held at 3:00 p.m. in Room 327 (the Rare Book Reading Room) of OSU's Main Library. Map and directions can be found at:

<http://library.osu.edu/sites/rarebooks/travel.html>



Chillicothe Field Trip

Bob Bennett

On November 12th, some 20 plus members of the Aldus Society visited two interesting and hospitable locations in Chillicothe, Ohio. The first stop was a visit to the McKell Library located in the Ross County Historical Society complex.



The McKell Library has over 37,000 items in its catalog. Included are over 14,000 books and 15,000 photographs as well as manuscripts, sheet music and, diaries. The core of the collection consists of gifts from Colonel David McCandless McKell. These gifts started in 1940 and continued for twenty-two years. After his death in 1962, his family donated his personal collection of books and manuscripts to the Ross County Historical Society. In addition, many residents of Ross County have also given their special books to the Society. Subjects range the entire Dewey Decimal System. The 19th century is the most heavily represented period, but the time span extends from the 12th to the 21st century.

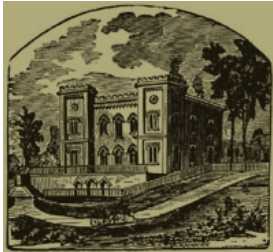
The McKell Collection consists of fifteen manuscripts, fourteen of them illuminated, eleven incunabula (books printed before 1501) and some 2,300 other titles – primarily relating to, or written for, children. The children's literature starts with *Regime Scholariu* (1488) and is especially well represented in the period from 1760 to 1820.

The library's strongest subject is history. Contemporary accounts of the Revolutionary War include: American archives transcribed by Peter Force (1774-1776) and *The American Revolution* written in scriptural verse in 1793. *A Narrative of the Campaign Against the Indians, Under the Command of Major General St. Clair* (1812) bridges the period leading to the War of 1812. The collection of this period is outstanding and includes Adam Walker's *Journal of Two Campaigns* (1816), James Foster's *The Capitulation* (1812) and the four volume epic poem, *The Fredoniad: or, Independence Preserved* (1827). Among the books on the Civil War shelves are: the histories of the 2nd, 32nd, 46th, 73rd, 81st and 149th regiments; the 27 volumes of *Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion*; *Harper's Magazine*, 1861-1865 and *The Official Roster of Ohio Soldiers in the War of the Rebellion* (12 volumes, 1893).

The manuscript collection includes territorial and early statehood documents and papers of David Trimble, B. F. Stone, James Swearingen, Joshua Sill and others. The papers

of Walter Dun (1782-1838) and of Samuel Williams (1786-1859) contain detailed pictures of life in early Ohio. Early newspapers, in print and on microfilm, are also available. The early Ohio imprints number almost two hundred.

Following a brief time for browsing, we were given a very informative talk by Evelyn Walker, the librarian for the McKell, and an Aldus Society member. We were shown examples from the varied collections and Ms. Walker discussed many of the books. Although not hands-on, all the books



were on open display for close observation. Pat Medert, author and President of the Historical Society, assisted Ms. Walker and gave additional insights.

Following a communal lunch and a brief and enjoyable walk through downtown Chillicothe, our group

was off to the hilltop home of Dard Hunter, now the home of Dard Hunter III and his wife. Designed by the senior Mr. Hunter and constructed in large part by German craftsmen, Mountain House, as it is called, was the site for the rest of our Chillicothe visit.



The interiors of the house, the grounds around it, the fully functional hand-operated printing press and separate gift shop put the cap on an interesting visit — a visit that all the Aldus Society members could agree was an enjoyable day.



Membership Renewal Time

Aldus Society dues correspond with the calendar year, which means that it's membership renewal time again. A copy of the Membership Renewal Form has been mailed separately to all members.

Unsure if you've already paid your dues? Simply check the mailing label on Aldus Society mailings; your paid-up membership year appears after your name (or the first name listed for Family memberships). New members who join after September 1st will have their membership terms extended through the remainder of current year plus next complete calendar year.

If you're one of our members who lives more than 100 miles from Columbus and can't regularly attend Aldus Society functions, you're eligible for a half-price membership. Just remember to check the appropriate box on the membership form when you renew.

Please return your membership renewal as soon as possible so we can better plan our budget for the upcoming year.



Lilly Library to Host Leaf Books in the Spring

A unique exhibition of 45 leaf books will return to the mid-west when it will be on display in the Lilly Library of Indiana University on April 3–26, 2006. *Disbound and Dispersed: The Leaf Book Considered* is the first exhibition to examine the history of the leaf book, a late 19th century development that incorporates a leaf, or single page, from an original work with new supplementary text in a fine press publication. While leaf books have a devoted following, the practice of creating them, which entails destroying one book to make another, continues to be controversial.

The leaf books in the exhibition contain manuscripts and printed leaves dating from the 12th through 20th centuries. Noteworthy leaf books in the exhibition include those containing original leaves from the first four folios of William Shakespeare's plays, a leaf from the Gutenberg Bible, and a leaf from the first edition of the *Canterbury Tales*. Books were drawn from the collections of Northwestern University, University of Chicago, Brigham Young University, Harvard University, Indiana University, R.R. Donnelly & Sons Co. and private collectors.

The Caxton Club of Chicago, a society of book collectors founded in 1895 and named after the first English printer William Caxton, organized the exhibition.



In His Library ...

Jane Austen (1775-1817)

In his library he had always been sure of leisure and tranquility; and though prepared ... to meet with folly and conceit in every other room of the house, he was used to be free of them here.

Pride and Prejudice



Visit the Aldus Society web site for up-to-date information about our programs and activities, in-depth articles about many of our speakers, and links to other book related organizations.

www.AldusSociety.com





The Aldus Society

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Worthington, Ohio 43085-1150

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Holiday Dinner a Grand Success

2005 was another great Aldus Society year!

The evening of December 5th found nearly fifty Aldus Society members and guests joined together at Martini Restaurant for our annual Holiday Dinner to celebrate another successful year. In what was generally acknowledged as the best such gathering in the organization's history, attendees renewed the many friendships that have formed around their common passion for books, book people, and the printed arts.

(Images courtesy of George Cowmeadow Bauman)



Lois and Geoff Smith quietly relaxing at the end of a hectic year.



Bill Evans and Jay Hoster discussing the problems of the world and deciding that none of them really matters tonight.



Scott Williams, Christine Hayes, Linda Mizejewski and George Bauman sharing the Holiday spirit.



Marcia Preston and Scott Williams in a moment of Holiday conversation.

