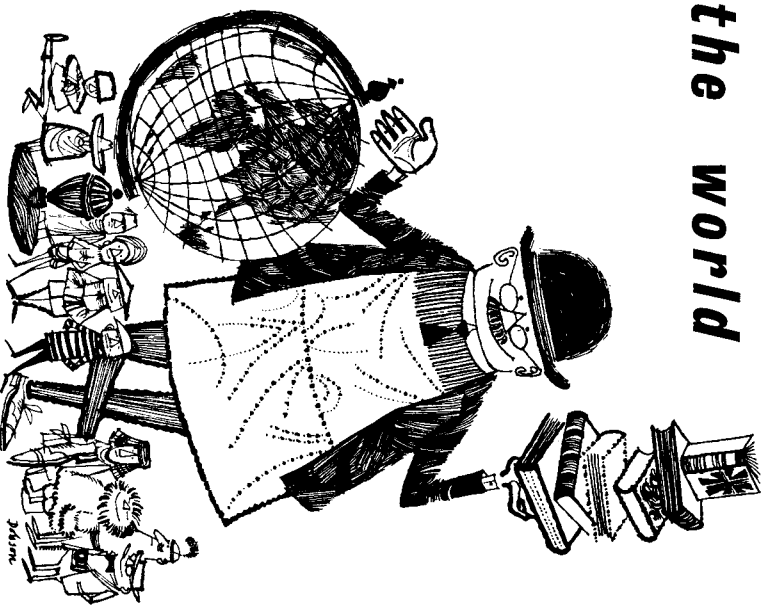


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The Private Library

THE QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF THE
PRIVATE LIBRARIES ASSOCIATION

Collecting Children's Books

Irvin Kerlan

The Gogmagog Press

My Books About Books

David Chambers

C. A. Prance

Association Affairs

Recent Private Press Books

Vol. 5 : No. 1

January 1964

The Private Libraries Association

65 Hillway, London N16

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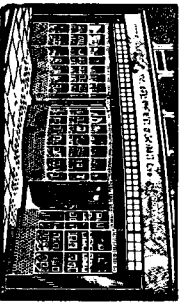
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The Private Libraries Association is a society of people interested in books from the amateur or professional point of view. Membership is open to all who pay one guinea on January 1st each year regardless of the date of enrolment.

Founded in 1956, the Association immediately organised the Exchange Scheme as a means of co-operation among collectors and students. *The Exchange List* is published four times a year.

The Private Library, begun in January 1957, has printed contributions from members and experts outside the society on a variety of subjects concerned with the world of books and the organisation of libraries at home.



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Vol. 5 No. 1 January 1964

Association Affairs

Publications

Ann Renier's "Annuals and Keepsakes", to include photographs of books in her library, will be published by the Private Libraries Association during 1964.

Howard M. Nixon's "The Development of Certain Styles of Bookbinding" (illustrated by thirty-two bindings in half-tone), which was issued by the Association last October, has proved to be one of our most successful publications. A limited number of copies is still available from the Publications Secretary, 41 Cuckoo Hill Road, Pinner, Middlesex at 5s per copy, or 3s 6d to members.

Among the contributors to this number of "The Private Library" is Dr Irvin Kerlan, the eminent American specialist on children's books, who will be a regular reviewer of books in his field of interest.

London Meetings, 1963-4

A visit to the Lambeth Palace Library has been arranged for January 21st. On March 21st, David Chambers, who writes on Morris Cox's Gogmagog Press in these pages, will give a talk on last year's private press books.

COLLECTING CHILDREN'S BOOKS

by Irvin Kerlan

COLLECTING first and special editions of children's books as published through several centuries in their original languages and translations, the enthusiast will have a spirited adventure. The horizons are vast and only physical and financial limitations will influence the nature, period and scope of the materials to be acquired, since this approach represents the history of bookmaking throughout the world. In relating my interest in collecting, it is to be expected that personal experiences will be relied on to highlight the many pleasures and few disappointments encountered along the way.

Children's books together with the original art and manuscripts for them are the chief holdings of my private library. In acquiring them the same concerns as to condition, edition and handling arise as in all

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collecting. There is the additional hurdle of finding books in good condition whenever possible in book jackets. This stems from the child's "reading to pieces" the books he enjoys.

There is a deserved enthusiasm for the artistry of the illustrations and the graphic qualities of the book in addition to the literary values. Yet the artist has been neglected even more often than the author in descriptive bibliographies. There are a few exceptions but even in the instance of the notable trio of British picture book artist-authors of the nineteenth century: Kate Greenaway, Randolph Caldecott and Walter Crane, there seem to be no complete and authoritative checklists of their graphic and literary contributions. When we turn to the twentieth century, we find it is an even more neglected field. To overcome this deficiency it becomes the collector's first adventure to locate or develop a complete bibliographic checklist of the output of the person whose work is desired.

In presenting her scholarly bibliographic checklist of Beatrix Potter, Jane Quinby opens her book with the remark: "It may be some time before a definitive bibliography of the works of Beatrix Potter is completed". This statement leads me to add that there are many opportunities for the development of bibliographic materials.

Awards

As a basis of a contemporary collection, the acquisition of first editions of children's books which have been selected and awarded special recognition in the 1900s is a fertile field to explore. For example, the acquisition of first editions of Newbery and Caldecott Awards, the highest annual American awards in the field of children's literature, will provide the thrill of the chase. Since 1922, there have been 42 books honoured with the Newbery Medal and, since 1938, 26 books received the Caldecott Medal. It is of interest to note that both of these awards were established by the late Frederic G. Melcher, the distinguished dean of publishing in the United States. One of these awards is designated for the British apothecary, John Newbery (1713-1767) and the other for Randolph Caldecott (1846-1886), the outstanding British artist, who died in Florida, U.S.A.

Books for children which have been recognized for their graphic excellence by the National Book League, The American Institute of Graphic Arts or the Graphic Arts Societies of many countries are worthy of the attention of collectors.

There are major literary awards for children's books in many

countries, including the Carnegie Medal and Kate Greenaway Medal in England. In 1958 the Hans Christian Andersen Medal was established to recognize internationally a distinguished contribution to children's literature. Eleanor Farjeon was the first to receive this award for her significant writings. Since then this award has been presented bi-annually. Astrid Lindgren of Sweden, Erich Kästner of Germany and Meindert DeJong of the United States have also been recipients.

There are compensations in having special materials to enhance the books which have been highly honoured. The Collection is especially fortunate in having an egg tree made by the Caldecott-winner, Katherine Milhous, the distinguished author-artist of *The Egg Tree* (Scribner's) and several of her original paintings and her book dummy for it. Lynd Ward made available a painting for *The Biggest Bear* (Houghton, Mifflin) and only a few months ago I was presented by Mary Silva Cosgrave, the editor at the time of the book's publication, with one of two copies bound in bear skin. Other artists have provided original art for their American Award books including Leonard Weisgard, Roger Duvoisin, Louis Slobodkin, Elizabeth Orton Jones, Marcia Brown, Nicolas Sidjakov, Marie Hall Ets, Ingrid and Edgar Parin d'Aulaire, and Berta and Elmer Hader. The British artists, Edward Ardizzone, H. V. Drummond and William Stobbs have presented original art from their Greenaway Award books.

Similarly notable authors on both sides of the Atlantic have been gracious in making available manuscripts. Robert Lawson, Meindert DeJong, Jean Lee Latham, Marguerite Henry, Carol R. Brink, Rosemary Sutcliff, Alison Uttley, Geoffrey Trease, Aaron Judah, Elizabeth Coatsworth and Virginia Sorensen are among them.

Winnie the Pu and Dr. Lenard

A unique, current development with children's books was the unprecedented appearance on the American best-seller lists in 1961 of *Winnie the Pu*, the Latin translation of A. A. Milne's classic *Winnie The Pooh*. Bibliographically this book is of major interest to collectors. At the time of its joint publication in the United States and England in December 1960, I learned of a privately-printed edition of *Winnie the Pu*. I wrote to Dr. Alexander Lenard asking if he could help me obtain a copy. In his cordial reply from Brazil, Dr. Lenard pointed out he had 100 copies printed in 1958 but he no longer had one. Instead, he generously sent the manuscript of his translation. Subsequently, Dr. Lenard located and sent me one of the hundred paper-covered Brazilian copies.

Book Prices

The price of first editions of important and desired children's books is rising as is true with all good books. About two years ago a first edition of *Little Black Sambo*, by Helen Bannerman, was offered for sale at auction. A British dealer felt it "might fetch \$200.00". It came as no surprise that the book sold for \$1,000.00. This strengthens my belief that children's books are monetarily valuable and the rare ones command premium prices. It would be interesting to forecast which children's books will be highly desired by collectors and the prices they pay for them a half century from now. It can safely be assumed that the personal adventures and pleasures to be encountered in collecting children's books will always overbalance the monetary gains.

Social Values

Many books are popular as period pieces which may be regarded as clear indications of the social attitudes and tastes of the people. This has been true through time. It is fair to add that children's books tell us something of the people who purchased them and also foretell something about the children of a succeeding generation. The social customs expressed in children's books reveal a great deal about the times in which they appeared. By using this approach to reflect the social patterns, we make collecting adventurous for ourselves and noteworthy for the students of today and the future.

Collecting is challenging and stimulating. In collecting contemporary materials there are no absolute guideposts and so the collector assumes the rôle of a trailblazer. One of the greatest rewards is knowing as friends the authors, artists and other persons closely allied to children's books. There is a growing enthusiasm for collecting children's books, especially in large teaching centres. In this connection I would like to pay tribute to the outstanding collection of British children's books assembled by Edgar and Mabel Osborne. This valuable collection is now at the Toronto Public Library. The catalogue of *The Osborne Collection of Early Children's Books, 1566-1910* is a handsome book, ably compiled by Miss Judith St. John to inform us of 3,000 of its special holdings and their publishers.

Building a collection of children's books may be a hobby and public service as manifested by the notable Osborne Collection in Canada and the important Rosenbach Collection of early American children's books at the Philadelphia Free Library. The extended study of children's books will provide a rewarding and continuing adventure for all who engage in such a happy pursuit.

THE GOGMAGOG PRESS

by David Chambers

MORRIS COX was helped by a long experience in the printing of line- and woodcuts when in 1957 he decided he would print his own poetry in future. Since his first tentative struggles with type and damped, hand-made paper he has made some nine or ten books, interesting in form and content, and possessed of a rather mysterious beauty which easily overcomes any eccentricity of type or style. Because he insists on doing all the work of making the books himself, and in completing every operation in every book with meticulous attention to detail, there are never more than a hundred or so copies in any edition. He will often have written the text, and nearly always have designed and cut the illustrations; the type is set by hand and printed on home-made presses; the binding cases are immaculately hand-made; the finished books are given acetate jackets and then lovingly wrapped in coloured tissue, sealed with red paper seals and neatly parcelled off to their purchasers. Yet, despite all the time and labour involved—and time to such an artist is the most precious of commodities—the books are not over-priced: twenty-one shillings for a piece such as the *The Lost Fisherman* was, for instance, excellent value.

There are now four presses in use: an Adana Eight-Five, which is used for letterheads, prospectuses and other ephemera, and three home-made presses for printing the books themselves.

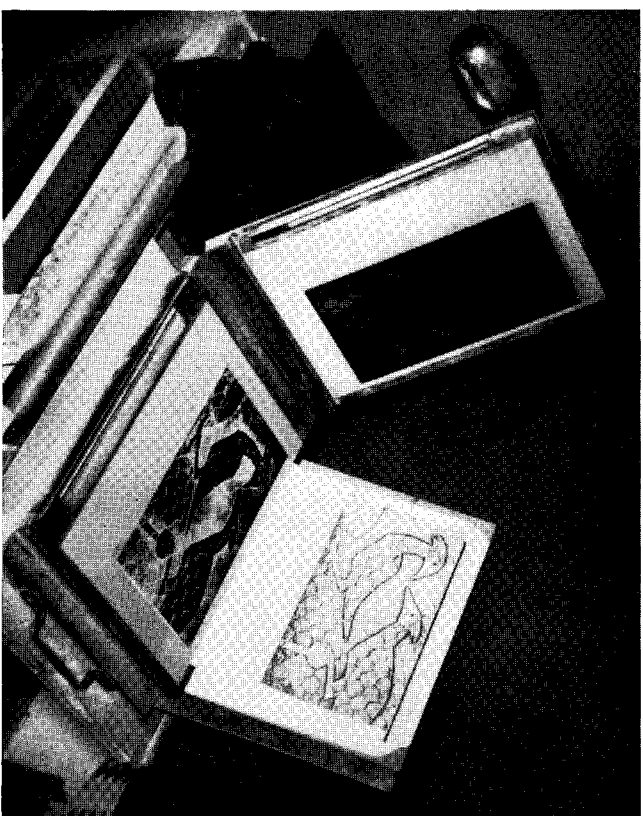
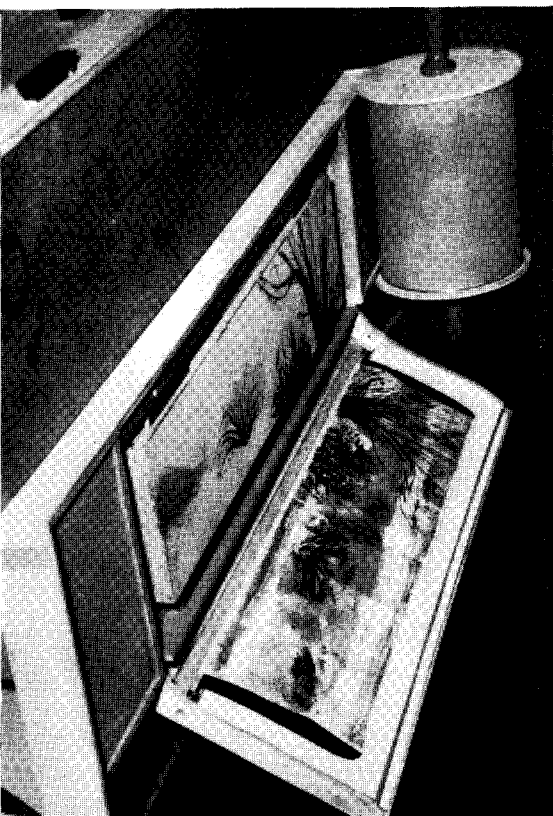
The most used of these three is an adapted office letter press, which has been mounted in a wooden framework so that interchangeable wooden carriages may be easily pushed in and out by hand. Several carriages have been made, variously fitted to take type, blocks or offset devices. Basically, each is a flat wooden tray with a lid hinged to it at the edge which goes under the press first, but they vary in detail according to the sort of printing being done. Some will take type or blocks in the tray (or bed), while the paper is fed into clips on the lid (or tympan); others may have the positions reversed, with a block mounted on the lid and the paper carried on a frame set in the bed. This last method is used, for instance, when making monotypes, such as those on the endpapers of *A Medieval Dream Book*. These are created on a sheet of plastic mounted on the lid of the carriage: when the design is finished the paper is placed in the bed and printed.

A sort of reverse-offset print is made by an extension of this same

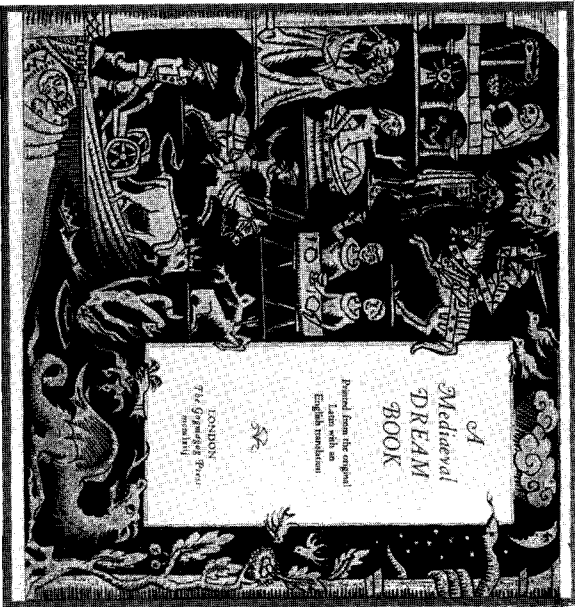
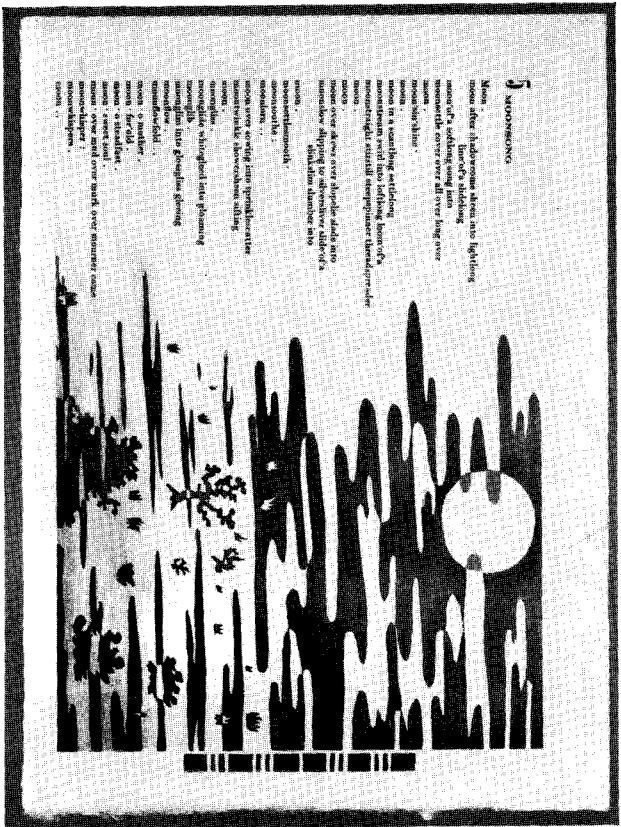
method. The un-inked engraved block is put in the bed and impressed against the offset sheet of polythene or lino which has previously been inked all over. The raised surfaces of the engraved block pull some ink off the offset sheet, leaving untouched the ink on the parts which correspond with the lowered parts of the block. The block is wiped clean, and again impressed against the sheet so as to remove yet more ink, and this process is repeated several times until the blacks of the original block show nearly white on the sheet, and only the whites of the original show black. Then at last the block is removed, a paper-carrying block put in its place and the image that has been so carefully prepared on the offset sheet is printed down on to the paper. The resulting print is the reverse, black for white and white for black, of the print which would have been produced if the original block had been printed in the usual way. The background will always show a faint patina of ink, unless highlights are particularly wanted in it: these may be got by cutting away the linoleum offset sheet where there is to be no ink at all. If before the final printing, the engraved block is rolled with coloured inks all over, or perhaps only in parts, and this ink is transferred to the offset (in place of the black ink which has been pulled off previously), then beautiful multi-coloured prints can be taken at a single impression.

Yet a further adaptation of this offset process leads to the making of *phantographs*: dreamlike, shadowy impressions of natural objects, such as leaves, grasses, cloth or other materials that may be flattened. These are glued on to a block, varnished to give cohesive strength, and used to pull ink away from, and then possibly to add different coloured inks to, an offset sheet, as described above. Very complicated and beautiful effects can be obtained in this way, for the offset method has the great advantage that the print can be seen on the plastic before being printed irrevocably on to the paper, and may therefore be worked on for as long as is necessary to bring it to perfection.

One of the other two presses has been used primarily for offset printing: it is made from an old Ajax lever press which has had the lever lengthened, a larger wooden bed substituted for the original metal, and the platen faced with plywood. Originally nine inches deep and six inches wide, it is now the same depth, but twelve inches wide. The bed has wooden flaps hinged on each side, one of which takes the engraved block which is to be offset on to the platen, while the other takes the paper. The principle employed is the same as that for offset printing on the office copying press but, of course, the flaps are quicker to use than the interchangeable base blocks which have to be used with that, and in



(Top) The Roller Press; (below) the Office Press, with an original block in the bed and an offset sheet, from which some ink has been pulled, mounted on the lid. (A finished print on a paper-carrying block rests against the wall.)



(Top) Double-page opening (before folding) from '9 Poems from Nature'; (below) double-page title of 'A Medieval Dream Book'.

such an involved process any improvement in speed is most valuable; on the other hand the lever press is a defective instrument for the printing of large blocks, and the slower but stronger office press has to be used for these.

The most recently-built press is still largely untried, no books or major work having been printed on it yet. Made on the lines of an ordinary flatted proofing press, it was in fact designed from first principles, and it was not until later that Cox came across an engraving of one of the commercial presses that have been in use for so many years. The bed of the press is a wooden tray thirty-two inches long and seven inches wide. Extending beyond the ends of the bed are type-high, plastic-topped platforms, seven inches long, on which the heavy impression roller rests after each traverse of the bed. The tympan is hinged to the length of the bed, and is made of thin, hard, flexible plastic, faced with a piece of thin rubber covered in "Contact" plastic sheeting. The roller is seven inches in diameter and nine inches wide (so that it overlaps the type-high edges of the bed), and has wooden handles projecting at each side. It is made from an old toffee tin filled with type metal and concrete, and is covered in felt.

The press was designed to enable some eight pages of text to be printed, side by side, at once. Up to now two pages have been printed on a sheet, which is then folded in half, with the printing inside, and the bindings have been constructed by gluing the backs of the folds together to make the spine of the book, and then pasting the fore-edges of adjacent leaves together so that only the printed sides of the pages can be seen. But on the new press the long sheets can be folded concertina-wise and only two or three such sheets will be needed to make one book, with correspondingly few joins at the fore-edges.

The binding cases for all the Gogmagog books are very carefully made by hand. The necessity of employing conventional binder's cloth has been overcome by the use of skilfully-applied acetate glues which do not penetrate unloaded cloth as would ordinary glues. In this way it has been possible to bind in all sorts of dress materials, suitings, skirims and so on, matching the feel and look of the binding to the text and illustrations. Paper and plastic labels have often been made up of two or more pieces printed in different colours and then glued together to achieve particular effects.

The books produced by these unusual processes are naturally very different, one from the other, in content, illustration and binding, yet still manage to retain a unity deriving from their common source.

Yule Gammon, 1957, a poem by Morris Cox, was the first booklet to be printed, although it was not issued under the Gognagog imprint. The text, on white machine-made paper, was not particularly well printed, but was illuminated by its two holochrome illustrations, printed in yellows, browns and blues. ("Holochrome" in this context implying prints in several colours obtained from one block by the "cut-and-come-again" process, in which more of the block is cut away before each impression in a different colour. Despite the fact that the block is destroyed as it is used, the method has the one great advantage that with care it is possible to obtain absolutely perfect register of the blocks.)

The ten illustrations to *The Slumbering Virgin*, 1958, the first true Gognagog book, were also holochromes. Forty-five copies were successfully printed on a smooth, cream, machine-made paper but the illustrations in the fifteen special copies printed on a hard, unsympathetic hand-made paper from Hollingworth's were not, in the artist's view, good enough, and the special copies were therefore never issued.

The same fate befell three of the ten copies of *A Bird's World*, printed in the same year. The five illustrations are some of the most beautiful in all the books from the press: engravings on lino printed in maglio in various colours, and from the surface again in other colours. The text is introduced in typical Gognagog style . . . 'Fascinated by the reticulations of a cracked plate, I began to dream. My dream lasted no more than a moment, yet during that time a whole Bird's World was revealed to me . . .', and the few short lines of prose support the engravings to probe that world most exquisitely. Those few copies that were bound had red plastic spines, black plastic-covered boards, white plastic labels on the front cover and spine, and red endpapers.

Thirty-five copies of *9 Poems from Nature* were issued in 1959. Lino-cuts brushed with water colours were printed on damped Japanese mulberry paper in primeval greens and blues, matching the feeling of the onomatopoeic nature poems. The text was not so successfully impressed however, the ink being rather too thin and the type clogged in consequence; but the binding, though still not perfect, was a great improvement on that for *A Bird's World*—grey cloth boards, piped in green at head and foot, with red and white plastic labels, and pink endpapers printed from a lino-cut in greyish green.

The next two books, both produced in 1960, were illustrated with phantographs. *The Curtain*, severely consistent in all its parts, had text and illustrations printed entirely in black and red. The poem was set

in Ultra Bodoni Italic and the type was placed variously on the page, sometimes even across the fold—a device only just successful because of the binding process which allowed the pages to be opened almost flat. The abstract phantographs (taken from lace curtains, gloves, leaves and other materials) spread over double pages in the same way. Red plastic labels round off a very formal black binding of suiting material with a horizontal white pin stripe. A most successful book.

The phantographs in *War in a Cock's Egg* were printed in several colours, again across the double page. The poem was set in Rockwell Medium and Italic, and printed, perfectly registered, with very narrow inner margins at the fold, or centred across it. The type was well printed in black, blue, red and violet on a variety of coloured Ingres Papers, and the binding, in red cloth with white paper labels, maintained the high standard achieved in *The Curtain*, as indeed have done all the bindings since then.

Chimney-pots, a children's book, followed in 1961: a gorgeous book with a bright turquoise binding, embossed yellow endpapers and text and illustrations printed in a rainbow of colours. It was printed on the Adana, the text for each page being proofed, the linocut designed round the proof, printed, cut-and-come-again, and, finally, the text printed in and over the pictures. The result was a real children's story to be read night after night before bed—but at the same time a collector's item that the bibliophilic parent would rather preserve in all its freshness in his bookcase.

In 1962, a most sophisticated piece for grown-ups was produced. *Conversation Pieces: humorous situations revealed in fragments of dialogue* was illustrated from blocks built up from cardboard, plastic and other materials, printed by the offset process on the adapted Ajax press. There was a particularly pleasing title-page set in Figaro and Rockwell and printed in black, brown, yellow and grey-green. The obviously humorous situations are very funny, and so presumably are the others. The binding in coarsely-woven linen scrim over a red paper is a pleasure to handle.

A Medieval Dream Book, a most interesting translation by Brian Cron of a fourteenth-century manuscript list of dreams and their meanings, was the first book to be issued last year. The only illustration (apart from the nightmarish swirling monotypes which form the endpapers) was that for the double-page title, but this was a particularly fine example of offset printing from a detailed linocut of dream symbols. The original Latin and its translation face each other, well placed on

tall pages, and bordered by Roderick Cave's Calypso ornaments, set in many different combinations.

A second children's book, *The Lost Fisherman*, followed in September. The story was dictated by the printer's younger brother when he was six, and the linocuts were done at the same time. Now after a lapse of some twenty-five years they have made an enchanting book: an apple-green binding, offset linocut endpapers, a sunlit, playbill title-page, and the text set round the illustrations which were printed in several soft pastel colours.

These books from Gogmagog have been among the best-produced and most interesting of all those published by private presses in England in the last five or six years, and it is good to know that several more are in active preparation: *Crash!*, a block sequence being printed for the Society of Private Printers, was to have been finished by the end of 1963; *Winter Landscape*, a book without any text, has been started on the Roller Press; and a lot of work has already been lavished on *Mummers' Fool*, a poem on a fertility theme, which promises to be the most elaborate book from the press so far. Planned, but not yet started, are *A Victorian Dream Book*, *Conversation Pieces* (series 2), *A Sort of Ballads* (original poems), and *Lady in the Sea* (a short history of bathing costumes). We must hope that the London giants, Gog, Cox and Magog will not tire of their labours before we have had all of these, and yet more beside, in the years to come.



Some Tenets of the Gogmagog Press

A Private Press is not (and has no right to be) as other presses are.

Anything that will take ink and permit its transference to paper is a legitimate working material and constitutes "printing".

Apart from the inking of type, widely variable hand-inking is an art in itself.

No serious work should be attempted that cannot be done as well or better by the average commercial printer.

Lettering (typeset) and illustration must have absolute unity, as in some fine, early manuscripts.

There is no ideal type. Perhaps typesetters should be one's own, with a character of one's own. However, better an ugly face perfectly married to the mood of the work than one that sits pretentiously in a vacuum.

MORRIS COX

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MY BOOKS ABOUT BOOKS

by C. A. Prance

SOME damnable heretic once propounded the fallacy that it is a waste of time to read books about books. The heresy is very old: it has been recorded as far back as the time of Montaigne. Callimachus wrote some nonsense about a big book being a big evil, though he may not have qualified it as to subject; and it has been conjectured that what Solomon really said was, 'Of making books about books there is no end'. The fact remains that Robert Blatchford was right when he said that a man writes books about books because he loves books; he reads books about books for the same excellent reason.

I am eternally grateful, therefore, to the owner of a tiny bookshop—long since disappeared—in Blackfriars Road, Portsmouth, who strongly recommended, and persuaded me to buy, both John Hill Burton's *Book Hunter* and P. B. M. Allan's *The Book Hunter at Home*. It was an octavo, cloth-bound edition of Burton, since supplemented, but not replaced, by the large-paper edition with a memoir, portrait and attractive view of the author's library.

How I revelled in the sketch of Archdeacon Meadow, who, on the occasion of his visit to London to be examined by a committee of the House of Commons, 'suddenly disappeared with all his money in his pocket, and returned penniless, followed by a wagon containing 372 copies of rare editions of the Bible'. Then there was Fitzpatrick-Smart with his private limbo for the receipt of author's presentation copies—he was too much a gentleman to sell them and of too kindly a nature to burn them—so they suffered an entombment 'decidedly outside the circle of his household gods'. The famous picture of Thomas De Quincey under the name of Thomas Papaverius is a gem, but no quotation would do it justice.

I have always felt that the first half of Burton's book is more entertaining than the second, but when I read Allan's *The Book Hunter at Home* I was enthralled right up to the last few chapters on specialization, which didn't mean much to me in those days. I liked particularly his story of the armchair traveller who systematically went all over the world with the early explorers by means of their books, supplemented by modern maps and charts. Then there was the ambitious Mr Brown, a student of genealogy, who was fortunately prevented by his wife from naming his infant son Turchetil Brown, after an ancestor—

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Turchetil Le Brun!

These two delightful books of course whetted my appetite for more, and I soon had Andrew Lang's *The Library*. What book-collector could resist a book with chapters headed 'An Apology for the Book Hunter', 'The Library' and 'The Books of the Collector'? This led to the same author's *Books and Bookmen*, Blades' *Enemies of Books*, A. L. Humphreys' *The Private Library* and Percy Fitzgerald's *The Book Fanatic*. Two of the best of all were J. Rogers Rees's *The Diversions of a Book-worm* and his *The Pleasures of a Book-worm*. Here I read of the fascination of association copies of a book, of the wonders of Some Other Folks' Studies', and of many books beloved of bibliophiles.

It is curious how the end of last century and the beginning of this seemed to see the publication of so many of these books about books, which publishers tell me would attract no readers now. The 1920's and 1930's were good periods also, for we had the books of A. Edward Newton, Iolo Williams, William Dana Orcutt, Cyril Davenport, Paul Jordan-Smith, Sir William Darling and of course Holbrook Jackson. How thankful one is for *The Anatomy of Bibliomania*. I think that perhaps the publishers may be wrong in their feeling, for I find also on my shelves the delightful writings of Percy Muir, the scholarly works of John Carter, and the enthusiastic books of Lawrence Clark Powell, all published in recent years.

A favourite volume is *The Autolycus of the Bookstalls* by Walter Jerrold, published in 1902, with chapters on such bookish books as Southey's *The Doctor*, 'acquaintance with whom is at once a source of much entertainment and a liberal education in Literature'; on 'Some Kerbstone Libraries'; on end-pages, autograph copies, pirate books, Booksellers' Row and a copy of Hood's *Plea of the Midsummer Fairies*, and a barrow in the New Cut which yielded a copy of Garnett's *The Twilight of the Gods*.

I find much pleasure in reading of the great book collectors of the past. I have in mind C. I. and M. A. Elton's *The Great Book Collectors*, 1893, and Seymour de Ricci's *English Collectors of Books and Manuscripts*, reprinted in 1960. Elton's story of the prodigious memory of the great Antonio Magliabechi of Florence, who lived in a 'kind of cave made of piles and masses of books' and died in his eighty-second year 'as happy as a king', has always been a favourite. There is much of interest, too, in W. Roberts's *The Book-Hunter in London*, 1895, with its sketches of old bookselling neighbourhoods and of those who frequented them.

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The book barrows in Farringdon Road are still good and recently yielded me *Excursions in Libraria: Being Retrospective Reviews and Bibliographical Notes* by G. H. Powell. Though new to me, it was published in 1895 and is of the authentic flavour, even if the preface does say it is intended for the general reader rather than the collector.

Deserving of special mention are, I feel, the stories by R. S. Garnett originally contributed to *Blackwood's Magazine*, but later collected into two volumes: *Some Book-Hunting Adventures*, 1931, and *Odd Memories: More Book-Hunting Adventures*, 1932. The author, whose father was Superintendent of the Reading Room of the British Museum, was brought up in an atmosphere of books, and although he turned to the law as a profession, he received enormous pleasure in collecting books in his spare time. He came in contact with many well-known and amusing figures and many of them appear in these books.

The stories of book-finds in some of these collectors' memoirs call to mind the class of books described as book-collecting fiction. Among the best of these I should place *The Intimate Thoughts of John Baxter, Bookseller*, 1942, by Augustus Muir, *The Unpublished Memoirs*, 1924, by A. S. W. Rosenbach, *The Love Affairs of a Bibliomaniac*, 1896, by Eugene Field, and a play: *Nathaniel Baddeley, Bookman*, 1924, by Dorothy Una Ratcliffe. *The Private Papers of a Bankrupt Bookseller* by Sir William Darling deserves special mention and it is frequently dipped into, while among stories about bookshops there are Christophle Morley's *Parnassus on Wheels* and *The Haunted Bookshop*, E. V. Lucas's most attractive *Over Bemertons*—with its stories of Dr Giles's *Chinese Biographical Dictionary* and Aubrey's *Brief Lives*—and Flaubert's *Bibliomania*, reprinted in 1954, which I first read of in Lang's *The Library*. Although not quite of this type some of the stories of M. R. James have a decidedly bookish atmosphere, and more recently I read that fascinating volume of short stories *The Alabaster Hand and Other Ghost Stories*, 1949, by A. N. L. Munby, Librarian of King's College, Cambridge.

Worthy of mention too are books such as J. Penn's *For Readers Only*—amusing studies of readers in the Britigh Museum Reading Room—and certain chapters in books, for example, R. W. Chapman's first essay in *Portrait of a Scholar*, 1922, and Edmund Blunden's 'Bringing Them Home', originally printed in the first number of *The Book Collector's Quarterly*. For sheer attractiveness of title it would be difficult to surpass Basic Anderson's *Fragrance Among Old Volumes*, 1910.

But books about books are not all memoirs of book collectors and

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book-collecting fiction, fascinating as these can be. For the collector has just as much pleasure in reading, and of course, possessing, books on bibliography and librarianship, including those on bookbinding, typography and printing, bookplates, bookselling and publishing, and the very large class of purely critical works which are rather outside the scope of this article.

Of bibliography I find on my shelves one of the best of all books on this subject, R. B. McKerrow's *An Introduction to Bibliography for Literary Students*, now reissued, a volume to go back to again and again. Interesting and useful also are Arundell Esdalie's *A Student's Manual of Bibliography*, and his *Sources of English Literature*, while of older books which are still valuable I find those by James Duff Brown, H. B. Wheatley, J. H. Slater, John Power and Charles T. Jacobi. Bibliographies of particular authors are, of course, acquired according to one's interests, and those I have found useful for my own library are J. C. Thomson's *Bibliography of the Writings of Charles and Mary Lamb*, 1908, Robert Eckert's *Edward Thomas*, 1937, and Edward A. Martin's *Bibliography of Gilbert White*, 1934. Lowndes' *Manual* is still found to have material not available elsewhere, and a most valued possession is the *Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature* with its supplementary volume.

Closely akin to bibliography in interest, I find the many books on libraries and librarianship, such as Esdalie's *The British Museum*, 1946. One of the best is J. Willis Clark's *The Care of Books*. The author calls his big book 'An Essay on the Development of Libraries and their Fittings . . . to the end of the Eighteenth Century', but he does this to indicate that it is merely an attempt to deal in a summary fashion with an extremely wide and interesting subject. The many illustrations in the volume are a source of delight to anyone fascinated, as I am, by mediaeval libraries. A more recent book which I have enjoyed is *The English Library before 1700*, edited by Francis Wormald and C. E. Wright, published in 1958.

Then there are the interesting volumes on bookselling and publishing, from Charles Knight's *Shadows of the Old Booksellers*, Curwen's *History* and Marston's *Sketches*, to F. A. Mumby's valuable recent *Publishing and Bookselling* and the many volumes telling the stories of particular booksellers and publishing houses, such as those of Grant Richards and J. M. Dent. Some cover the work of private presses and two which I have enjoyed are C. W. Beaumont's *The First Score*, 1927, and Thomas Jones's *The Gregynog Press*, 1954.

Most collectors will find books on bookbinding interesting, if only as a help to understand certain aspects of bibliography. Invaluable here is Douglas Cockerell's *Book-binding and the Care of Books*. Among my books on printing are Oliver Simon's *Introduction to Typography*, Stanley Morison's *Four Centuries of Fine Printing*, reprinted in 1949, and the second edition of S. H. Steinberg's *Five Hundred Years of Printing*, 1962.

Essential reading is, of course, that done in catalogues, and while most have to be discarded, a few treasured examples are hoarded, as are odd volumes of *Book Prices Current*. Foremost among my catalogue is that sumptuous production issued in 1941 in three volumes on the library of A. Edward Newton. Others of particular interest include the *First Edition Club Exhibition Catalogue*, 1922, Elkin Mathews' *English Literature in the Early Nineteenth Century*, issued in 1930 with an introduction by Edmund Blunden, the *Catalogue of an Exhibition arranged to illustrate New Paths in Book-Collecting*, 1934, the National Book League *English Poetry Catalogue*, 1947, and a catalogue of the Strawberry Hill sale in 1842.

Periodicals devoted to book-collecting have flourished from time to time, usually for relatively short periods. They often turn up as odd volumes on the barrows, and among those I have acquired and enjoyed are *The Bibliographer*, *Book Lore* and *The Bookworm*, all published in the 1880's by Elliot Stock who produced so many books about books. Then there is *The Bibliophile*, 1908, and a gap in my collection until the famous *Book Collector's Quarterly* of the 1930's. Today one is grateful for *The Book Collector* and, of course, *The Private Library*.

Finally, what books there are in praise of books! From *Philobiblon* to *The Booklover's Enchiridion*; Andrew Lang's *Ballads of Books* and Gleeson White's *Book Song*; essays by Charles Lamb, Robert Southey, Leigh Hunt, Alexander Smith, Austin Dobson, Augustine Birrell and countless others. One of my favourites is Edmund Gosse's introduction to his *Gossip in a Library*, 1891. He writes of a late book-collector who, being anxious to fly all outward noise, built himself a library in his garden. As Gosse says, 'The phrase seems to contain the whole felicity of man—a library in a garden!' It sounds like having a castle in Spain, or a sheep-walk in Arcadia.

RECENT PRIVATE PRESS BOOKS

To Hades we will go, by Jane Howlton Black. (44pp, paper covers. Westport House, Wallace J. Bonk, 2002 Shadford Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan, U.S.A.). The second publication from this press; a very amusing collection of poems which deserve a better presentation.

A New York Chappell ABC. (28pp, bound into red Fabriano paper covers; 90 copies; not for sale.) A co-operative project, organised by Lili and Erich Wronker for which each of the co-operating members of the New York Chappell prepared two pages (each for a given letter of the alphabet) which had to relate to New York City. A collection lacking in the Chappell's earlier *Uncoloured Plates Books* was obtained by this device, and by the organisers' insistence on the use of Basingwerk paper and a common page size. The results are remarkably attractive.

Haiden from Telegraph Hill, by Ruth M. Jung. (24pp, paper wrappers; 200 copies, not for sale. Karuba Press, Theo Jung, 1873 Stockton Street, San Francisco 11, California, U.S.A.) A charmingly produced booklet, in which semi-transparent interleaves of different colours have been used very effectively.

Franz-Joseph had a vacation, by Erwin Raith. (22pp, paper boards; 250 copies. Tinhorn Press, Chas. F. Robertson, 808 Ponce de Leon Terrace N.E., Atlanta 6, Georgia, U.S.A.). An amusing and successful exercise in the use of simple type ornaments to illustrate the text.

Amey, a tale of the Berkshire Hills, by Foster M. Johnson. (20pp, cloth boards; 100 copies, price \$3.75. Bayberry Hill Press, Foster M. Johnson, 401 Preston Avenue, Meriden, Conn., U.S.A.). An interesting story, well produced.

The Whirling Id, and other regressions (poems) by Frank Irwin. (32pp, paper boards; 350 copies, price \$2.00. Hillside Press, Frank Irwin, P. O. Box 204, Franklin, N.H., U.S.A.).

Diary of John Doe. (xxvi, 28pp, paper boards; 325 copies, price \$3.50. Hillside Press).

Grimm's fairy tales; a selection. (63pp, paper boards; 350 copies, price \$3.50 Hillside Press).

The Blockberg trials, by Frank Irwin. (vi, 70pp, paper boards; 310 copies, price \$3.50. Hillside Press).

Four miniatures, each 2½ X 1½ inches, very well produced and with an interesting text. By no means mere toys.

The life, resurrection & immortality of Napoleon, by Richard Pennington. (12pp, paper wrappers; 25 copies, private circulation. Redpath Press, Richard Pennington, McGill University Library, Montreal, Canada). An interesting essay, produced very well in a first-Empire style. R.C.

Twenty-five Poems, by Evelyn Ansell. (44pp, 8½ X 5½ inches; 10 copies in full morocco, £8 8s; 90 copies in silk, £4 4s. Vine Press, Hemmingford Grey, Huntingdon, England). Mr Ansell's verses have been given an elegant presentation in this edition, printed in 16-point Centaur on hand-made paper (made by J. Batchelor for William Morris), decorated with Miss Diana Bloomfield's wood-engravings, and bound in green silk or morocco. There is some slight offsetting on a few pages, presumably caused in binding, but the inking is very even, and the excellent engravings are beautifully printed — the engraved lettering in red on the title page being particularly pleasing.

Victoriana, by Robert Priddle and R. D. Robinson. (77pp, 8½ X 11¼ inches; 500 copies, price £1 3s. The Art Society Press, Kings College School, Wimbledon, London, S.W.19, England.) In the last few years the Art Society Press has been steadily increasing its reputation for fine and interesting printings, and now in a second, revised and much enlarged edition of *Victoriana*, all previous work has been excelled. Old printers' shops, Stevenson, Blake, St. Bride's, Mr Lawrence — all these sources and more were tapped to provide the large number of original blocks around which a most useful and readable text has been written. Excellent value.

The Song of Theodosius, by Raymond Lister. (6) leaves printed on one side only, 7 X 5 inches. Four copies on vellum, hand coloured by the artist and bound in leather, £10; 11 copies on vellum, uncoloured, bound in buckram, £6; 26 copies on Japanese paper, uncoloured, bound in buckram, £2. Post free from the Golden Head Press, 26 Abbey Road, Cambridge, England.) A strange prose poem produced in a style derived at least in part from Blake. Mr Lister's handwritten text and pen and ink illustrations are reproduced by line blocks and well printed on the soft Japanese paper. The buckram bindings are neatly made, but cry out for a little gold blocking to set off their sombre grey. D.J.C.

The name of John Roberts Press is well known to collectors of fine editions and privately printed books. Their productions range from the twenty-guinea magnificence of a folio 'Song of Songs' to the more modest charm of 'Twelve by Eight', recently published by the Private Libraries Association.

Many bibliophiles cause small books to be privately printed, so to clothe some favoured item in worthy typographical dress. They may cost little more than a good Christmas card — though there is, of course, no limit at the opposite end of the scale.

Those contemplating the production of a book or booklet 'printed for their friends' may expect interested co-operation from John Roberts Press Ltd, 14 Clerkenwell Green, London EC1.