THE TARKINGTON PAPERS

BY JAMES WOODRISS

W hen Booth Tarkington won his first Pulitzer Prize in 1919 for The Magnificent Ambersons, he seemed to many contemporaries the most important and lasting writer of his generation. Younger men like Sinclair Lewis and F. Scott Fitzgerald looked on his solid achievements with awe and envy; older friends like Hamlin Garland and William Dean Howells marveled at the full flowering of his creative powers as he neared fifty. He had been writing with steadily growing power for two decades—years in which the tempo of American life had accelerated unbelievably—and from a youthful fondness for costume romance, popular in the nineties, he gradually had found his great theme in the growth and change of American society. He then was in the midst of his most fruitful decade, already having written Penrod, Seventeen, The Turmoil, and soon was to produce his most significant novel, another Pulitzer Prize winner, Alice Adams.

The Tarkington Collection, which Princeton University acquired in 1951 through the gift of Mrs. Tarkington, is a valuable record of a long and productive literary career. These papers document virtually the entire span of Tarkington’s life (1869–1946) and detail with remarkable fullness his activity as novelist and story writer, playwright and citizen. The collection, moreover, adds another important segment to the source material now available, in various libraries, on American authors of the present century. Contemporary literary history is being written from such data as the Sherwood Anderson Papers at the Newberry Library, the Woolcott Papers at Harvard, the Jack London Collection at the Huntington Library, and the Fitzgerald and Tarkington Papers at Princeton.
The accumulation and preservation of the Tarkington Collection, however, owes very little to the subject himself. Although naturally acquisitive, Tarkington was extremely modest, completely unpretentious, and had no passion at all for documenting his own career. Fortunately, his father, mother, and sister were industrious collectors during his youth, literary apprenticeship, expatriate years, and days of participatory playwriting. Later when he settled down to a more regular existence, dividing his time between Maine and Indiana, he lived expansively in large establishments where correspondence and manuscripts could accumulate easily. After 1912 Mrs. Tarkington’s careful management of her husband’s affairs contributed significantly to the preservation of the papers. During the last decade and a half of Tarkington’s life Miss Elizabeth Trotter, his secretary, added her industry in keeping intact his lifelong accumulation of literary documents and in expanding the record. Tarkington, however, put no faith in literary historians, bibliographers, and critics and would have enjoyed hugely the spectacle of scholars poring over the van-load of papers that bear his name. He once wrote Julian Street: ‘Professors don’t know about writing. ‘Literature’ for them is a museum: they’re curators and look after the dusting of classic curios . . . when they try to make opinions . . . they just gesture with their dust-rags.’

The Tarkington Collection is certainly one of the most completely preserved records of any significant American author. Although there are many Tarkington letters among other collections, such as the Ade Papers at Purdue and the Woolcott Papers at Harvard, and many other letters still are owned privately, Mrs. Tarkington’s gift is remarkably comprehensive. It contains most of the manuscripts of Tarkington’s novels, short stories, plays, essays, and autobiographical writings. It includes perhaps nine thousand letters, about one-quarter of which are by Tarkington; and several hundred volumes in various editions, domestic and foreign, of his works. There are, in addition, nearly three score anthologies reprinting Tarkington material plus other books to which he contributed introductions and chapters. There are also half a dozen scrapbooks, Miss Trotter’s stenographic notebooks, and much miscellaneous material like photographs, drawings, theater programs, medals, and diplomas. Besides all this, the collection includes a large assortment of the periodicals containing Tarkington’s writings in their first and sometimes only published form. Indeed, there is no phase of his life which is not documented by these papers, and to house the manuscript material alone requires about 160 boxes.

For a biographer this collection contains infinite riches. The record begins with a random sampling of juvenilia—a diary Tarkington kept in 1881, the year he was Penrod’s age, and from the same era a notebook filled with fictional derring-do in the manner of Penrod’s sawdust box compositions. From a later period in Tarkington’s youth has survived an unfinished comedy of manners written about 1885 for his high school friends in Indianapolis. Tarkington’s two years at Phillips Exeter Academy (1887-1889) are documented adequately by letters to his parents. The exhilaration of first being away from home, the excitement of seeing New York, the stimulation of inspired teaching, the broadening of intellectual and social horizons—all are recorded vividly in this letter sequence. These epistles, unfortunately, are not matched by similar letters surviving from Tarkington’s undergraduate years at Princeton (1891-1893).

Tarkington served his literary apprenticeship, which lasted from 1893 through 1899, quietly at home in Indianapolis. During this time he wrote industriously and unsuccessfully. Everything he produced came back so promptly that he sometimes felt his manuscripts had been intercepted in Philadelphia and returned before New York editors had seen them. The collection contains many unsigned and unsigned manuscripts written in this early era: plays fashioned for the Indianapolis Dramatic Club (in which he usually acted the title role), stories that were rejected and laid aside, several chapters of an abandoned novel about the theater, and many poems. An early draft of one story, “Mr. Brooke,” which was revised and later published after Tarkington had “arrived,” contains an explosive marginal annotation by James Whitcomb Riley, who had been asked for an opinion. The story was historical fiction, in the vogue of the nineties, and its diction was reminiscent of Goldsmith. At the end of the tale, Riley, whose ear for Hoosier vernacular was acute, wrote in disgust opposite an archaism: “Watch those dam’d things that give you away! . . . Quit affectation. You know better.”

Tarkington’s apprenticeship came to an end late in 1898 when S. S. McClure accepted The Gentleman from Indiana for serialization in his magazine the following year. The novel had been started soon after Tarkington returned home from Princeton, but he had been unable to finish it and had turned to writing plays and stories and drawing sketches that no editor would buy. The
novel's development can be traced from the manuscript material in the collection, for there are several notebooks with tentative starts and fragments of the early drafts. In addition there is a sheaf of papers which contains an outline showing that Tarkington first planned to begin the novel, doubtfully and far away, in Bar Harbor, Maine. There also is the map of Marshall, Illinois, which Tarkington made to help him in plotting the story; for, despite its title, The Gentleman from Indiana takes place a few miles west of Terre Haute in Marshall, where Tarkington often visited his cousin in the summers.

As soon as McClure accepted the novel, Tarkington rushed off to New York to cut the manuscript from one hundred thousand words to a sixty-thousand-word, six-part serial. During the winter and early spring of 1899 he entered the dazzling literary and theatrical world of the metropolis, the life he had dreamed of during the lean years of apprenticeship. His letters home from New York at this time recount breathlessly the pleasures of his first literary recognition. He could hardly believe that he was associating with such interesting and important people as Kipling, Garland, Frank Stockton, Ida Tarbell, F. N. Doubleday, and others, and reported his activities fully. The letters written from McClure's home on Long Island, where he did the actual cutting of the manuscript, are especially attractive. Before he returned to Indianapolis in May, he also had prepared Monstre Beaulaire for serialization, and the first installment of The Gentleman from Indiana had appeared.

During the first decade of the twentieth century Tarkington wrote three more novels, several shorter works of fiction, and many stories; but he was best known then as a playwright. He collaborated with Harry Leon Wilson, former editor of Puck, on the fabulously successful The Man from Home, which ran five and a half years and made a fortune for Liebler and Company, its producers. This comedy, opening in Chicago in the autumn of 1907, catapulted Will Hodge to stardom and began a playwriting partnership between Tarkington and Wilson that lasted for ten plays. So active were these dramatists that once in the autumn of 1909 they had six old and new plays running simultaneously.

Tarkington's playwriting career is fully documented in the collection. All the plays that he wrote with Wilson during the 1907–1919 period and again during a spate of play-carpentry in 1919 have been preserved. Many of the plays never have been published, and many of the manuscripts exist in several states. There is even a complete play that the two authors discarded as not good enough for production. In addition, of course, there are the manuscripts of the nine full-length and seven one-act plays that Tarkington wrote without collaboration. This latter group includes the near-perfect comedy Clarence, the production that made Alfred Lunt a star and was Tarkington's best play. At the peak of his creative power, Tarkington wrote this play in 1919 especially for Lunt, watched it go through rehearsal with scarcely a word changed, and finally saw it produced to the enthusiastic acclaim of both critics and theater patrons.

A valuable supplement to the Tarkington Collection is the papers of George Tyler, producer and director of eleven Tarkington plays between 1909 and 1931. This material, acquired by the Library before the Tarkington Papers came to Princeton, contains several hundred Tarkington letters, written between 1915 and Tyler's death in 1946, which match the Tyler side of the correspondence in the Tarkington Collection. Taken together, these letters furnish an intimate account of the writing, casting, and producing of several plays: The Country Cousin, written jointly with Julian Street; Clarence, which starred Helen Hayes as well as Lunt; Polydekin, a play written for George Arliss; and The Wren, which was created especially for Miss Hayes in 1921. Tarkington always took detailed interest in the staging, casting, and directing of his plays, but after 1915, when he returned to playwriting following a five-year lay-off, he usually stayed away from the place of production. Hence his interest was recorded in frequent letters to Tyler. The producer-director's replies are less interesting than the playwright's, but the Tyler letters are supplemented in the Tarkington Collection by many epistles from critics, actors, actresses, managers, and other producers with whom Tarkington was associated. For example, Tarkington's long friendship with Alexander Woollcott, which began when the latter was a New York drama critic, is recorded in the papers by letters written to Tarkington between 1921 and Woollcott's death in 1943.

The manuscripts of all the books that Tarkington wrote down to 1913 are among these papers. After 1914, however, he became so well known that individuals and institutions began asking him for manuscripts. Subsequently, he gave Harlequin and Columbine to Phillips Exeter Academy, The Turmoil to Yale, Claire Ambler to the Library of Congress, The Plutocrat to Barton Currie (former editor of The Ladies Home Journal), and Kate Fennig to a war bond auction in 1943. (The manuscript now is in the
Indianapolis Public Library). Because Tarkington was extremely generous, luck certainly played a part in keeping the rest of his manuscripts together. Fortunately, however, among the papers are more than three dozen booklet manuscripts—fiction, essays, autobiography—plus the manuscripts of ten serials and story sequences never reprinted after serialization.

The manuscripts exist in various conditions, most of them in more than one state, so that from them Tarkington's creative process may be observed. The manuscript of Alice Adams is a case in point. This novel Tarkington wrote in pencil on large sheets of legal-sized paper—his normal practice until 1928 when failing eyesight forced him to begin dictating. The first draft of the novel, which was written from a surviving sheaf of rough notes, contains many cancelled passages, interlinear corrections, additions, deletions: in short, every kind of emendation. In addition, there is a typed copy of the revised first draft, which contains many corrections in the author's hand—so many that the first four chapters had to be typed a second time. Hence the manuscripts of Alice Adams include notes and first draft in longhand and a complete carbon typescript supplemented by an original typed copy of chapters one through four with penciled emendations.

The other book manuscripts in the collection show variations in procedure, of course, but for many of them there are notes, penciled first drafts with revisions, and edited typescript. Manuscripts written before 1912 usually exist in a fair copy, in ink, in the author's hand, and from this period there are few typescripts. The late manuscripts, sometimes including bits of Miss Trotter's first draft taken down in longhand from dictation, usually consist of a revised typescript (emendations sometimes in Miss Trotter's hand), the typescript from which the printers worked, and an unmarked carbon copy.

Occasionally with the manuscripts there is a set of galley proofs, corrected or not, as the case may be, or page proofs. Sometimes Tarkington made extensive corrections from published versions of his works, a good example being Cherry (1903), which was two years between serialization and book publication. This work was much changed before it was reprinted. Among the papers in the collection are the bound tear sheets of the novelette from Harper's Magazine, in the margins of which numerous changes have been penciled. There also are tear sheets, much emended, from the serialization of The Beautiful Lady (1905).

Besides the manuscripts of Tarkington's fiction, essays, and plays, the collection has a good many movie scenarios, mostly written for the old silent pictures. Tarkington created a thirteen-part boy serial, reminiscent of Penrod, for Goldwyn Pictures Corporation in 1919; a full-length boy story, Boy o' Mine, which later was refined twice as a talking picture; two pictures for the old matinee idol Thomas Meighan; and several later scenarios for talking pictures never produced. Although most of Tarkington's novels were turned into movies, he had nothing to do with the film stories; and after his eyesight failed concurrently with the advent of sound movies, he gave up, without regret, going to the cinema. Yet Tarkington always was interested in new media of communication, and also tried his hand at occasional radio scripts; his most ambitious undertaking for broadcast was a one-hundred part, three-times-a-week serial carved out of Gentle Julia.

The portion of the Tarkington Papers which no doubt will be used the most is the extensive correspondence file. Tarkington's interests were broad, his friends varied; and his letters went to writers, artists, statesmen, and businessmen, who discussed with him everything from old paintings to the atomic bomb. Although three-quarters of the letters in the collection were written to Tarkington, the Library gradually is gathering additional Tarkington letters from his many correspondents and their heirs. Hugh M. Kahler '04, Erwin Panofsky, Ruth Gordon, and A. B. Maurice gave the letters independently, and Mrs. Tarkington collected many others before the papers were given to Princeton. In this category are the letters written to Harrison Daniels '93 of Dayton, Dr. Carlton McCallough of Indianapolis, Auber Warner, an English friend, and several others. There are besides, previously mentioned, many of Tarkington's letters to his parents, sister, nephews, and grand-nephews and nieces, and their letters to him. Especially attractive are the letters published in 1949 as Your Amiable Uncle, written from abroad in 1903-1904 to his nephews, John, Donald, and Booth Jameson, presented by them to the Library in 1951.

Because Tarkington's interests were extensive and his friends scattered and varied, the purely literary correspondence he carried on does not bulk large in the papers. But the number of important people represented in the collection by one to half a dozen letters is fairly astonishing. A partial list includes these: Maude Adams, George Arliss, Albert Beveridge, Heywood Broun, Richard Harding Davis, Norman Douglas, William Gillette, Ellen Glasgow, Nat Goodwin, Helen Hayes, William Dean Howells, Rupert Hughes,
Sinclair Lewis, Alfred Lunt, Percy MacKaye, Edgar Lee Masters, Meredith Nicholson, Walter Hines Page, James Whitcomb Riley, Theodore Roosevelt, R.E. Sherwood, Al Smith, William Howard Taft, Ida Tarbell, Hugh Walpole, William Allen White, Wendell Willkie, Woodrow Wilson, and Owen Wieter. Many of these persons were close friends whose slight representation in the letter file is no proper indication of the extent of the relationship. The same observation applies equally to the handful of letters (more than six but less than two dozen) from such close friends as Harry Wilson, George Ade, Otis Skinner, and Jesse Lynch Williams'g. The most sustained correspondences with writers were those carried on with Kenneth Roberts, Alexander Woollcott, Julian Street, and Hugh Kahler, all of whom are represented by a large number of letters written over a long period of years. The variety of Tarkington's interests and depth of his friendship may be judged by the large number of letters from boyhood friends, girls he fascinated during his bachelorhood, chums from Phillips Exeter Academy and Princeton, businessmen, painters, sculptors, and art dealers. He had a genius for making and holding friends. His popularity also may be gauged by a sampling of fan mail that has survived.

Another important aspect of Tarkington's career, which is well documented in the collection, is his relationship to the literary market place. From the six hundred dollars that McClure paid in 1899 for the serialization of The Gentleman from Indiana, Tarkington's rates climbed to sixty thousand dollars for Mirthful Haven from The Saturday Evening Post in 1920. The arrangements that Tarkington made for the publication of his works are recorded in many letters from editors and publishers. To supplement this material the Library has acquired as a gift from Carl Brandt, his agent after 1920, more than five hundred letters written either by Tarkington or on his behalf to the firm of Brandt and Brandt. Supplementing the collection still further, Harper and Brothers have given fifty-five items, including twenty Tarkington letters, which pertain to his relationship with that firm between 1909 and 1920. Tarkington's dealings with publishers at times was complicated, but his publishing history, generally speaking, began with McClure in 1899, later was divided between Harper and Doubleday, Page, and finally ended exclusively with Doubleday and Company. These papers contain many pertinent letters from McClure, F. N. Doubleday, Russell Doubleday, F. A. Dunca
Harpers, and other editors who were involved in bringing out his books.

Much material on the serialization of Tarkington's works also exists among the papers in the letters to and from the editors of The Saturday Evening Post, The Ladies' Home Journal, and other magazines that first printed his writings. This side of the collection reveals not only the transactions of the market place but also the more absorbing editorial taboos and crotchets. There is a good deal of evidence in this area to show both that Tarkington had more than a little trouble writing as he pleased and that he never gave ground in matters compromising his artistic integrity. When he wrote happy endings, it was because he wanted to, and when he chose to take his characters into the divorce courts, magazine editors had to accept his fiction as it was or, as they sometimes did, print either in part or not at all. It was actually coincidental that Tarkington's temperament usually produced stories acceptable to the mass-circulation magazines.

A close examination of the Tarkington Papers convinces this writer that Tarkington's achievement is badly in need of revaluation and restudy. His novels of the Midwestern growth have written a permanent page in American social and economic history. His activity in the theater, besides helping launch Alfred Lunt and Helen Hayes, demonstrated a bridging of the gap between fiction and drama that few American novelists ever have managed. His best novels, such as the Pulitzer-Prize-winning Alice Adams, are artistic accomplishments of a superb and well-disciplined talent, and his stories of boys and adolescents, such as Penrod and Seventeen, are minor classics of their genre, still in print and likely to be read for years to come. The Tarkington Papers make possible the study of a serious and dedicated writer whose literary career can reveal to his readers deep insights into themselves and their society.
Tarkington’s New York Literary Debut
Letters Written to His Family in 1899
EDITED BY JAMES WOODRESS

AFTER five years of literary apprenticeship, during which Booth Tarkington collected an enormous number of rejection slips, he received the electrifying news that S. S. McClure had accepted The Gentleman from Indiana. The publisher not only wanted to bring out Tarkington’s first novel, but he also wished to serialize the tale in his magazine. Would he, McClure asked, come to New York and trim his novel to three-fifths its length for use in the magazine? Would he, indeed? Tarkington left his native Indianapolis several weeks later to begin his long public career as novelist and short story writer. From the moment of his arrival in New York he entered a world of literature and art. His enraptured response to this new life is well recorded in long and frequent letters he wrote home during February, March, and April, 1899. Fortunately, twenty of these letters have survived and are here, with some abridgment, printed.

In editing the letters, I have shortened them about twenty-five per cent. I have silently corrected slips of the pen and a few errors or inconsistencies in spelling. I have also regularized some of the punctuation and have added or subtracted marks, where it seemed advisable, to make the meaning clear. Most of my cuts eliminated accounts of social engagements with former college friends and maternal relatives and bits of family gossip or business that lacked intrinsic interest. On occasion I deleted repetitious passages and allusions to small local facts or obscure friends. What remains is the picture of a young writer learning, to use Tarkington’s phrase, “what the world is like.”

EVERETT HOUSE,
UNION SQUARE, NEW YORK.

Wednesday Night
[February 1, 1899]

My dear, dear & honored Parents & Sister:—

What a whirl! All “like a dream.” I begin to feel like a notable personage. The trip was tiresome, very, in spite of the cliffs and hills of Pennsylvania which I saw all night in restless peeps from my berth curtain—everything covered with about the same half-inch of snow we had at home—scenery that “stood-out”—and reminded me vividly of that double glass picture thing Grandmother Booth had; the snow lying on the projections of the hills looked like extra high lights and the shadows, unfulled, in ravine and crevasse, were the more intense. The car was willy hot and stuffy—slept only a moment, during which I dreamed that Jno. & Don. [Jameson, his young nephews] were dancing on the roof and making my room shake so I couldn’t work. . . .

Got in in a slight snow storm— took car to the Everett & demanded comfortable room because very tired—room with bath, etc. Cheapest $4.00 a day— Took it! Still got it—take cheaper tommorow—have been very extravagant & luxurious. Open fire to rise by this morning. After wash & rest up after arrival felt lonely but lively (train was late) so telephoned Big [Harold Murray, his Princeton roommate] . . . we had simple dinner (No Demon Rum) and he left rather early. . . . When Big had gone I tackled my till [I] tumbled asleep. Morning—fire, bath, breakfast at ten—one orange—cup coffee—two eggs—$0.65! Then, at eleven—to 141-155 E. 15th—Scared in elevator, entered with trepidation, gave boy card and inquired Mr. McClure, in fainting voice—shown to room where homely youth at work—never looked up. Sat two minutes fumbling stick & gloves. Enter beaming youth with auburn hair, looks at me with twinkling & friendly eyes: “Aha!” (I hold self-commune) “He has read the “G. of.” He says to follow him but makes me preceed him— “Mr. Jaccaci’s (Yakatchy) room”—

Shown into room containing elegant foreign-looking man, brown skin, Van Dyke beard, glasses, fine eyes—often read his things—wrote the “Don Quixote” business in Century and has been on Century & Scribner’s, now with McC. He rises with a sort of joyous & polite howl!—“Ha! Ha! You are here! Ha, ha! It is You!”

Takes coat, hat & stick; scatters them amongst me & death masks of great men. “We haf waited for you!”— “And so it is you” over & over. Then into Mr. McC’s sanctum—he most cordial in a quiet way.—The place humming with business & visitors—others cleared out—left alone with him. Hau te’ has told us about him—absolutely uncharacterized in dress—pass him every minute on the street and not know him again—so commonplace & undistinguished yet not ordinary as to shape of head. . . . said he was sorry Mr. Phillips was ill and couldn’t be there—and “It’s very extraor-

1 Mrs. O. B. Jameson, Tarkington’s sister, who had visited McClure the preceding autumn, beseeched him into reading both Monstre Repairer and The Gentleman from Indiana. She had got to McClure only after routing John Phillips, a member of the firm, mentioned below.
inary you should have written this book—remarkable that a new fellow should turn up with a book like this."

"Oh I'm not new to myself, you know—I've known about me quite a while."

"But you were unknown to us—and we've been hunting all over the world for a serial."

"Then it's decided."

"Yes, it's decided. It's to go in the magazine. It will have to be reduced to 60,000 words" (as I had calculated) "though Miss [Viola] Roseboro's (unknown power not in town) "says not a word shall come out and I don't see where it can be cut. You may not think it's remarkable that you've written a book that makes you the only man we'll publish along with Kipling as a serial— but we are turning down a serial by Anthony Hope to put in this of yours. We are going to push you and make you known everywhere—you are to be the greatest of the new generation, and we'll help you to be." (This isn't for publication) Then he said some more in the same vein—concluding: "You've got a great sister."

"I rather think she is!"

"She took me all of a heap, I tell you!"

Then I held a reception. As Mr. [T. N.] Doubley told me this evening: "Hamlin Garland is telling me the plot of his new novel day by day; he was in the midst of the troubles of his heroine but when the word was passed around that you were there he bolted for you."

Mr. McC. opened his door and a tall woman came in smiling—a nice woman, Mr. McC. said: "Miss Tarbell, this is to be the most famous young man in America"—there were other people coming in and I felt like a large gray Ass—and looked like it. After while the others went away and Mr. Garland & I had a good talk—he's very homely and nice—Mr. Jaccaci says he orates about me, as, "Where will you find anything like that coming from New England! Where could there be such promise as that except in the West? When did you darned old New England turn out such a book?" Then Mr. McClure & Miss Tarbell & I went to lunch with Mr. Jaccaci at the Holland House—and say interesting it was—Jaccaci is great and Miss T. very clever and all very friendly... The lunch was long & delightful & when it was over it was almost time to dress for dinner—which was at the Century Club (the most aristocratic den of Art in the country) and for a pleasant surprise Mr. Jaccaci had provided Jesse [Lynch] Williams whom he had known in Scribner days. The C. Club is a wonderful place which I'll reserve. Mr. Doubley came—I get on with him nobly. They expected Mr. McClure's brother & Kipling by the same boat today but it hadn't come. Doubley & Jaccaci know him intimately and Barrie, et al.—talked of them charmingly—will probably see K. at the Saturday Night meeting of the C. Club. I dine with Mr. Doubley & go there after. I spoke of my admiration for [Robert Louis] Stevenson & Mr. Jaccaci arranged for me to dine at his house next Thursday to meet Mrs. Strong."

It's go to Lawrence [Long Island] with Mr. McClure tomorrow noon to stay all night. Big offers to come in town & share room till I go—get quiet room somewhere—I think it will be best plan—have been so busy with McC, people all day & evening have not seen Mr. Ives [apparently a family friend]. Like Mr. McC. very much so far and expect to continue. Took no cold & the pills are all I could wish. Be careful of yourselves & cause me no anxiety and I shall reciprocate—I could hardly have had a heartier welcome from the McC's, do you think?

With a heart full of love & gratitude

your affectionate

Booth.

Sunday Morning
[February 5, 1899]

Here at 'the Players [Club],'' dearest people, just loafing comfortably on a snowy day. Kipling's family are all sick and he didn't get down to the "Century Club" last night but I was not disappointed. Doubley has a beautiful house & a beauty of a wife—many interesting pictures, etc. There was an English Jew there, a man who lives in Henderson, Kentucky, "for his sins," he said, a most entertaining cuss and the most brilliant talker I ever met—not a writer—he went with us to the club where we stayed till two A.M. amidst a crowd of young & middle-aged—all different species of celebrities; met Frank R. Stockton amongst others—the yellowest-wrinkledest little man [who] ever lived, very pleasant. Jaccaci was delightful as usual and Doubley most interesting.

8 Isabel Strong, Stevenson's step-daughter, who for a time had been his amanuensis. Tarkington later met Mrs. Strong's mother, Fanny Van de Grift Stevenson, who had grown up in Indianapolis and sometimes visited her old home in the years (1894–1914) after Stevenson's death.
about Meredith & Barrie & others—he knows them all intimately. He knew Stevenson well; he was with Harper when Jekyll & Hyde came out and decided on it for them—confessed he was in great doubt whether or not to reject it—said Stevenson had a much vaguer idea of his purpose in that book than the critics had.

Alden Weir, the painter, was there—he asked me if I could remember his old fellow-student, Love, of Indip's—and told me many interesting stories of their experiences in Paris, duelling etc. Paul Leicester Ford, the poor little cripple, was there; he talked on matrimony to Doubleday and told him his (D.D.'s) view of marriage was worthless, as you couldn't expect a man in the midst of a battle to give you a description worth a rap—it was the bachelor's Bird's-Eye-View that was interesting and clear! Then I met Zalinski, the gun man, and many others "too numerous to mention."

I saw [Eugene] Morgan act yesterday afternoon and he is my man—he's the best young man on the boards—about the only one I ever saw who acted to suit Me!*

Tomorrow I go down to Lawrence (unless Mrs. McC. [who had been ill] is worse) to work till the version is in shape—if it takes more than a week or ten days (I can't tell now) I'll come back here. I don't feel like living on them any longer than that. I've had and am having robust & perfect health....

Your grateful & affectionate Booth

THE S. S. MCCLURE CO.
141-153 E. 25TH ST., NEW YORK

Lawrence, Wednesday Night
[February 8, 1899]

My dearest ones:—

Down here, working like a hatter. Mr. McC. makes things pretty easy for me—big room—furnace heat and enormous open fire-place with wood fire burning all day & night. From my windows I see the long lines of surf breaking on the beach, south shore of Long Island, half a mile away. Haven't left the house all day—snowstorm blowing like sixty. Mr. McC. didn't rise till noon; stayed here. He slipped up to my room about four and smoked a cigar. Mrs. McC. doesn't allow him to smoke. As he washed his face to be rid of the smoke, he said: "Funny thing to be 42 and in love with your wife, isn't it?"

Mrs. McC. only leaves her room for dinner and retires at 8:30.

There is a jolly French Governess who speaks no English and dinner is a running fire of French between her & Mrs. McC. & the children. Mr. McC., who has no French, some times joins in—his shibboleth is "Omelette soufflé, par excellence, Rico Janeiro, Dolce Fair Niente." They give me a fat lunch at night: milk, rolls, doughnuts, orange—very thoughtful and considerate—feel very much at home....

I am hearty as Punch, with great love

Your grateful Booth.

THURSDAY NIGHT.

THE PLAYERS, 16 GRAMERCY PARK

Thursday Night.
[February 9, 1899]

Dearest Ones:—

Just returned from Mr. Jacadi's dinner, a very wonderful one; I took out Mrs. J. and sat at her right. The others were Mr. & Mrs. Blashfield,* Bessie Potter the sculptress (about two feet tall), Bartlett, the Legion d'Honneur man—he's the queerest American I ever saw—and the center piece was a flat Japanese dish of Goldshoes, swimming. The most beautiful effect of lights I ever saw—only four candles about 18 inches apart in the middle of the small round table, heavy red shades at just the height of the eye—no other light—faces were like soft Rembrandt paintings—It was exquisite. Afterwards, about thirty people came in and wandered amably about, talking—they were nearly all of them names one hears, Kenyon Cox [portrait painter], etc. I told him some things about pictures that I don't believe he knew before—I didn't know who he was till after my course of instruction was complete.

I was disappointed not to meet Mrs. Strong, who failed to come, for some reason. Enjoyed the Blashfields & "Many Others."... Tomorrow I go back to Lawrence & resume operations—getting on—four numbers about completed—difficulty is with the last part, but think [1] see light.

* Edwin Howland Blashfield, New York-born artist, who was much in demand as decorator of ceilings and painted, among other things, the great central dome of the Library of Congress.
* Paul Wayland Bartlett, sculptor who did the equestrian statue of Lafayette in the Square du Carrousel, Paris.
A beautiful & sparkling letter from Hauté today. Am gay & hearty—everything goes well.

Your grateful and affectionate Booth

EVERT HOUSE,
UNION SQUARE, NEW YORK.

Sunday Night
9:30
[February 12, 1899]

Dearly loved ones—

I've just got back from Mr. McClure's—their steam-pipes burst yesterday; all those in my part of the house were shut off and they had to change my room. To do this one of the girls had to go in with Mrs. McC, and as she is ill I knew it was rather trying for her, though she denied it. Mr. McClure came in to see if I was all right in the morning—I was snug under thick light eider-down, but the room was chilly and I had dressed getting up. He built a big fire for me himself to rise by. I did my work in the library, at his desk—one of the pleasantest rooms I ever saw. This afternoon he and all the children and dogs and I (they have four dogs and all the neighbors' dogs regard McC's as a club) went out for a romp in the snow which was about two feet deep. McC had about forty yards of heavy sacking brought in in pieces of four feet by three—you put your foot in the middle, fold the sacking over the foot and wrap it around the leg to the knee, then wind heavy cord over it tight from instep to knee and your legs are dry and warm in the snow—the little girls put on boys' clothes and we all wore tuques and took tennis rackets and battled balls to each other till they were all lost in the snow. Then we tackled a contraption they have rigged up, half maypole and half merry-go-round—and ran races till we were out of breath—then back to a big wood fire. McC was like a rollicking boy—he's the strangest and one of the most interesting men I ever met. He wants me to go abroad with them and stay the summer at a house they have at Sensval, southern France—Alps in fall—said he'd give me $300 more for the serial if I'd come. He's a boundlessly ambitious man; he wants to start a second magazine—McC's having gone past 500,000. He told me his income was now $100,000—ten years ago it was nothing; he has got [James Joseph Jacques] Tissot's "Life of Christ" away from the Century—it's a wonderful book, price $150—he expects to make a million out of it and he will. He let me in on many a secret of the trade, and he seeks impressions that will aid him and does it so cannily that I am just now realizing that I spent the latter part of the afternoon telling him how to run his magazine. I told him (for one thing) that "Stakly & Co." had hurt both Kipling and McClure's, and he knew it was so. Jaccaci is going to Italy for his health and McC told me I could have his place at once if I had any training for it—I suppose it's about $7000 a year. I wouldn't take it if I could (I think I could have "talked big" and McC would have tried me and I'd have succeeded) but it would be an end to writing and the Golden Goose would lay no more eggs.

I finished the cutting and a rough draft of the cutting parts Saturday night and can do no more till I can get it type-written as it stands to see where I'm at—then there will come the careful work and changes here and there—it has become fascinating, so many problems and some of them have already solved delightfully. Therefore I thought I'd better come up this evening (especially as tomorrow is [celebrated as] Lincoln's birthday, a holiday here, and they can't get a plumber down from N.Y. till Tuesday). They made me comfortable but at some cost to themselves; they begged me to stay, all of them, and seemed very loath to have me go, saying they'd be blue if I didn't stay over tomorrow and just loaf. Mrs. McC is charming and immensely kind—and I'm sure they all really like me and that Mr. McC does. He may not be the man for everybody to trust but he is a man for me to trust—and I have no notion that if I don't state my terms and can get him to state his (when the work is ready) his will be better than I should ask for: what I'll ask for is ten per cent royalty [on the book] and $500 for the serial. The train left just after supper—we were snow-bound a while on the way up and yet thanks to cars right at the ferry I got here dry. Mrs. Jaccaci writes to ask me to dine again next Thursday and I shall go like a shot. I'm much healthier than when I left and am "taking care"... Keep well—thanks for beautiful and dear letters—your grateful and affectionate Booth...
EVERETT HOUSE,
UNION SQUARE, NEW YORK.

Monday Noon
[February 15, 1889]

I sit by my fire and sew a seam, dearest ones, determined not to set foot outside the Everett this snowy day... 15
I forgot to tell you I dined with Garland Friday noon (before I went out to Lawrence), with George Brett, too, the pres. of "McMillan Pub. Co." I think I like Mr. G. better than almost anyone I have met except Mr. and Mrs. McC. G. is earnestly and deeply good-hearted and gives one the most reassuring feeling—
I could go to him with any difficulty I might have and he'd pull me through—though I don't look for any difficulty; everything seems smooth.

... Keep as warm and well as I am—your grateful and loving Booth.

Sunday Morning
159 Madison Ave.
[February 19, 1889]

My dearest mother:

... have a most comfortable, warm, roomy room here with pleasant company at meals, splendid eating, a view of the Waldorf a block away, "fashionable neighborhood," a nice "lady like," quiet and obliging landlady—all for $90 a week which is astonishingly reasonable. So I had no immediate need of the $50 and am afraid you pinched yourself to send it. Until I pay the typewriter I don't need to think of $50—with this $50 I have $185 and feel pretty much like buying Broadway. I have sweat over the serial a lot—"it couldn't possibly be done at home; please don't beg me to return now—I can't show you why, except that I'm doing the first installment over, and with great puzzlement—it's a most delicate job; and it has to be done here; each one must be done over, and I have to see if they like it and if not, why not. There are heaps & heaps of little things I can't make clear to you but which are clear to me. Besides I need the immense stimulus of the life here—of the people I am coming in contact with—they are so suggestive, so electric. At home I give the stimulus to people; I suggest things—I tell people things. No one there (outside of Our Family) can tell me anything; here I get something from everyone I meet—get a heap. You'll just have to accept this as the fact—I am very much wiser than when I came, three weeks ago—my mind has opened a great deal, enlarged to new perceptions, in so many and so subtle ways that I can't go into it here for lack of time and space—would be like trying to say what the world is like. Please let me stay till my own time—I shall be able to repay the money or I shouldn't think of it. I cannot tell just how much longer the work itself will take. When it is done, I'd like to take a week just experiencing: it's important.

Mrs. Jaccal's dinner was as delightful as the other, if not more so. I met Violet [Viola] Roseboro and had a "long and improving talk" with her. She's about the cleverest woman I ever met—not entirely because she had read my ms and considered it the most important and best American book in twenty years. She talked of it for an hour with the most complete appreciation of every detail as well as the broader sweeps and intents.

It was of course an enormous pleasure. I go to a literary soirée of hers Friday which I anticipate with an acute pleasure. She is even brilliant enough to believe that no word of the ms should be altered. . . .

Sunday Night

Just from a dinner at Doubledays—Mrs. Kipling to my left, Mrs. Seton Thompson whom I took out, on my right. Kipling across the table, Zaliniski next, Bliss Perry, just beyond. Fraser (of "King for a Day" etc.) and one or two others like that—not a large dinner but an inspiring one, as you may guess. So much that was suggestive—too much to write—and beautiful things to eat—as well as hear and look at. Kipling was fascinating and distinctly admirable, even lovable. When the ladies had gone I sat next him and found him charming—then when we all went back to the drawing room he recited for us (twinkling through his spectacles, from a deep chair and nursing his knee and beaming about) a humorous poem on the Anglo-American alliance—one he will not publish and which he said had no name—it was stunning. Bliss Perry is a great fellow—I "got on" with him and little Fraser exceedingly—it was all quite enchanting—especially Mrs. Seton Thompson who is younger and much prettier than her husband. The Doubledays are very kind—D. went to the Everett and then walked up here in the rain, the other day, to ask me to this dinner. You see I'm having an improving time as well as working.
... Good night and the Gods give you joy and keep you all—
Your affectionate & grateful Booth

THE S. S. MCCLURE CO.
141-155 E. 85TH ST., NEW YORK
[February 28, 1899]

Dearest People:

... The compressing was almost finished when I came back from McClure's—but very roughly; I can’t go into it, because it’s too much on my mind, without talking of it when I don’t have to. . . .
I have just taken it (the first installment) away from McClure’s as they were on the point of sending it to the printer—to rewrite again; I’m not at all satisfied with it. My dear mother, you must learn to know that I don’t and cannot do things or see them as you do—as most people do—but in spite of that I know perfectly well what I’m about. If I didn’t do things differently (and sometimes better) I should not be very original, should I? . . . All of which means that the work must be done here. I couldn’t be more comfortable, and I could not be happier than in this life of wonderful & stimulating people where I meet those of my own & kindred professions and such rich intelligent appreciation of the work I’ve done—I don’t mean indiscriminate praise. I meet now every day and grow nearer friendship with those I have met, and, unless the other Tarkingtons and Jamisons were here, I couldn’t be happier. Yesterday was a holiday—my typewriter was away and no one at McClure’s—I was forced to loaf (such beautiful spring weather as it is and has been was never seen). . . . it was delightful fooling around with old Princeton friends [whom he met by accident] but since I’ve met people who work on my lines I’d rather have spent the time with them.

Was never more surprised than in [Edward] Bok of "Ladies Home Journal"—a really charming fellow—easy, bright, off-hand—I expected a little High-School-Teacher. Poor Mr. Kipling was taken very ill Monday evening (the night after he met Me) and everyone is sorry and anxious. I’ll see the Cranes, Clinton [apparently family friends or distant relatives], etc. when work is finished—until that is done I let only engagements with art & lite. people come in—for those are more important even than what Doubleday calls my squeezing a novel into a cablegram for the magazine. The March no. has a craftily worded announcement (next under Kipling) of the serial, in which Judge Tarkington of Indianapolis will see his name presented to some 550,000 readers. Query: What would S. J. F. 11 have given if the ad. could have followed, “Director Fletcher Nat. Bank and Manager Safe, Dep[osit]. Boxes $5.00 to $40.00—long time granted on lots of 200 feet.” The announcement is really very fine art; it’s written by “Sam,” himself—he puts every human interest into it—tells who the author is and a good deal about him in two sentences—praises the work but does not make the hideous mistake of claiming too much for it beforehand. It’s wise and good. . . .
I hope you are half as well as I am—
With all my love
Yr grateful and affectionate
Booth.

Tuesday Morning.
[February 28, 1899]

Dearest People:

This is my first totally idle day since I’ve been here—no work being possible. One copy of the 1st no. has gone to proof, another to [Ernest] Blumenschein. Phillips has not examined the second no. so I can’t do anything on it (he has it), and the type-writer has the third no. . . . I shall wire you when I go out for the photos I took at the farm and for “Johnie” [Jameison]—every characteristic Indiana picture you can lay your hands on, please, for Blumenschein. I am very glad we sat down on him to illustrate it—I’ve always liked his work and he was my suggestion; he is going to make the effort of his life on these pictures and I have great confidence in his ability. Mr. McClure wanted someone else but gave way to Jaccaci and me—Jaccaci has great faith in him. The poor fellow’s eyes are getting like Du Maurier’s and he can’t read—he’s only twenty-four—so I am reading it to him. It is a pleasant, pleasant task; he’s very much caught by the spirit of the story—both he and his friends, portrait-painters and illustrators (one of whom stayed awake nearly all night—he was so polite—when we left off at “By God, Judge, I’m afraid they have”—the most delightful fellows in the world. We sit in B.’s big studio where the Broadway roar comes faintly—and between chapters B. plays his violin for us divinely—then at five we take a walk. Last night [Sadakichi] Hartmann, a portrait painter, went with us; he is one

11 Stoughton J. Fletcher, Indianapolis banker and employer of Tarkington’s father, was the father of Louise Fletcher, whom Tarkington married in 1905.
12 The point at which the friends of John Harkless, the hero, realize that he must have been waylaid by the villainous Cross Roads gang.
of the beautifullest men I ever knew, Hartmann, and very like the Ivory Black stories. He has afternoon tea in his studio twice a month—and dresses exquisitely, holds himself like a rajah as we parade the avenue, and never have I seen such glittering shoes—since his own elbow makes them glitter. B. tells me that he often lives for several days on the wafers and chocolate and lettuce sandwiches, débris of the fortnightly tea—and he rises at six and scrubs his studio floor every day, polishes it with that hard-wood stuff twice a week—was almost arrested last week—caused great commotion—wished to beat his rugs and had no place to do it but the roof—this he reached by a dangerous climb—people saw him crawling out of a window at dawn with an immense bundle dragging after—and ascending a precipice of terra-cotta! No wonder!...

I ought to have written about Miss Roseboro's—I stayed till onethirty; it is a wonderful place to go and such talk—marvelous talk. A Mrs. Fisch read a story that was a story! a bird of a story—and I perceived my fame by the way they waited for my opinion when it was done. It was funny and I said "er" a great number of times. The wonderful part of N.Y. is its unfoldingness, new lights disclosed by the sliding screen which is the tomorrow—new brilliancies every day. Tonight I am going to see Mrs. Fiske in Magda. . . .

tomorrow night is the Seton Thompson's evening—so the week runs. Last night I met a Tammany alderman who keeps a saloon on the east side, met him at the Waldorf arrayed like the Prince of Wales, not having to do with Rum, but listening rapitly to the Hungarian Band. . . .

With all my love

Your affectionate and grateful

Booth...

Monday morning
[March 6, 1899]

My dearest people:

Draft & "Johnie" & photo's rec'd, and thankye ma'am—I knew that you could figure out my telegram berwixt you, somehow. . . .

Such gorgeous, beautiful, balmy spring weather we have! So springy inside you, it makes you feel. The work goes on; I am taking a final leave of the second installment before it goes to proof, today—a panic seizes me as to every word as I let it go. I like to loaf around the McClure shop—they're nice people. Did I tell you I liked Mrs. Fiske's "Magda" better than Bernhardt's? It's a wise piece of work—her houses are only half-filled.

I enjoyed the Andrews-Bradshaw-Fuller-Turnbull [Princeton friends] "smoker" that they gave for me Thursday night immensely. Their flat is handsome and roomy, and there were about thirty of the men I like especially—we sang everything of course. . . tonight I dine with Blumenschein again & go to the Yiddish theater. I find I have forgotten many people I used to know—every now and then on the street or elevator someone calls "Hello Tall," and I see a face familiar but unplaceable. Sims [Slos's] came up and spent Sat. aft. with me. William the Walker came up and announced that "Mr. Slush" was in the parlor. S. is enormously fat—5 ft. 6, weighs 215. He grows cleverer and cleverer. . . . Au revoir, then, and I'm hoping you're half as well as I—

Your grateful & affectionate

Booth.

Friday [March 10, 1899] [Special Delivery]

Dearest People:

Something must have happened to a letter you should have rec'd from me last Sunday morning—you don't speak of having it. I do go out a good deal; but I refuse as many invitations as I can—all those that won't be stimulating; and that is a good many; I think I got out of about thirty last night at the Princeton Club—with varying pleasibility and gracefulness. . . . Tuesday evening Jesse Wms little dinner was delightful; Mrs. Quigg's made another for me Wednesday— and we fell into a great discussion afterward in which all took part except Big who sat aloof with a jolly & flirtatious young lady. Last night Freddie Stelle and Jim Black [Princeton classmates] made another little dinner for me at the Manhattan, very regal, after which we went to the supper of the Princeton, C[ub], at Delmonico's. 'Twas laid for about 900, and when the coffee came I had a real old-time ovation, beginning with cheers and ending with [my singing] "Danny Deever," "The Levee" & "Banana Song," of course. There were many literary and newspaper fellers there and I endeavored to "disarm the critics" beforehand. McCready Sykes [93] asked after you all; his people are in Europe—he has developed wonderfully—he recited a poem of his celebrating the victory over Yale, and the football Poes, the

13 Mrs. Lemuel E. Quigg, whose husband was editor of the New York Post, one-time congressman, and chairman of the New York City Republican Committee.
sixth of whom made the run for us; he declared, in ending, that Yale church people have paraphrased the Litany and during Lent they chant:

"From all our Poes, O Lord,
Deliver us."

The type-writer has let me have the fourth installment and I am beginning to correct it. Phillips has the third and I will get it from him in a few days for the final re-touching. I send you proofs of the first—keep them; I have "read" them in another copy...

Mr. McClure says that if Haute comes east she must come down to Lawrence. Naturally he is enthusiastic about her. Mr. Jaccaci is looking very ill, poor chap—and anxious to get away and for me to go to Sicily with him. Doubleday has scarcely left the Grenoble a minute since Kipling’s illness. I called at the D.’s Sunday—they were both with Mrs. Kipling. . . . An avoird—the sunshine is just out-doors. I’ll go bask awhile—and return to 4th installment. Take care o’yerselves. . . . With all my love

Your grateful & affectionate

Booth.

Wednesday Morning

[March 15, 1899]

Dear Father,—

This was the vision that lately came to my door—and "up he got and let in," no May Maid but the March Hare "Willie," and on the rolls was your letter. I told Willie I had meant to get up for breakfast—why hadn’t I been wakened? "Aha, Mr. Ives! he just hented to the gyury that ye was workin’ late las’ night an’ after white ye’d be nadin’ yer fruit an’ coffee." Poor Mr. Ives! he sat up reading cill I had done rastling with the final word on the third no. and then put out my light, raised the window and tucked me in. By the way, I have the best bed! And for lunch at night a new Ives diet: pint of cream poured over shredded wheat biscuit. The type-writer yesterday finished the last of the 60,000 words—and I have it all here. There are six installments—not nine; the 5th is the puzzler; it goes from the C[ros]. R[oad]a.

14 Tarkington saw a good hit of this Mr. Ives during his three months in New York. I have deleted most of the references to him.

attack & "John B.'s body" to [elen]'s discharge from the paper, about 40,000 words squeezed into 12,000. I seem to have got out everything possible; yet 5,000 more words have to be cut and it must be made smooth. The book will come out in October. Kipling asked for the ms. Doubleday told me yesterday (first time he’s been at the office for a month), and D. is to take it to him. Mr. Jaccaci, poor chap, has sailed—he seemed much disappointed I could not go with him; I shall go and see Mrs. J. very soon and Miss Roseboro, from whom I just rec’d a characteristically interesting note. I go down to McC’s to spend Sunday with [Louis Maurice] Boutet de Monvel [French figure painter] and Louis Loeb [Cleveland-born artist and illustrator] and his wife, which will be pleasant, I think, and tonight is Mrs. Seton Thompson’s evening. Mother is anxious I should shake my Princeton friends and divide my time between “Literary people” & her relatives. If the latter only did not regard me as of “poor family”!

Sat next old Gen. Sickles’ & little Count Negroni at Lotus Club Monday evening; my cards at Century & Players have run out; so Lotos now my literary center. They have some of the greatest pictures in the world & it’s charming.

I’ve had a rush of invitations for this week—decline all except Mrs. Thompson’s, McC. Sykes’s & McClure’s...

Blumenschein gave me a charming original of Bob Skillett [a character in The Gentleman from Indiana] laughing at the backboard—it’s a corking thing; we went to the Hebrew & the Chinese theaters on the Bowery, Saturday night—with him I see some wonderful shades of life.

A beggar, last night, a broken Englishman, said to me: "It’s the loss of caste that hurts more, after all. You hear much of the democracy of your country. I find I didn’t know what caste was till I came here. People like the English, who are sure of their exact social rank, do not draw the lines of separation between themselves and the lower strata so sharply; they do not need to. It is you insecure Americans who make a laughingly manner to prove that you are aristocrats—it is your only way to prove it." He was just a street beggar. With greatest love to all Yr. affec. & grateful

Booth.

14 Major-General Daniel E. Sickles, former congressman and soldier, who lost a leg at Gettysburg, served as minister to Spain (1886-1893), and in 1899 was president of the New York state board of civil service commissioners.

15 I have omitted a long passage discussing Mrs. Tarkington’s worried admonitions against entanglements with a girl Tarkington had been seeing irregularly.
Friday Noon,
[March 17, 1899]

My dearest people:

I have already written about all the news of the week except that I am going up to the Allings’ [his mother’s New Haven cousins] on Monday—returning from Lawrence Sunday Night to catch a morning train.

It is a glorious, bright St. Patrick’s Day; very different from my last one here [1896] when the parade slopped through 6 inches of slush. I am as hearty as the weather, or H. Ives, which is pretty hearty.

Am still going at the fifth installment. What do you mean by, “Will the book be published?” It comes out in October and the serial finishes in that month instead of running to eight numbers so that the book can come out then and not miss the “Fall Sale.”

I must go at it—this is just to say I am well Saint Patrick’s day ‘n’ all marmun and wishful you all are the same. Tell John [his ten-year-old nephew] his perfumery would smell as sweet in any other advertisement and that he should not patronize a low commercial spirit that asks 18 sales and, so far as writ to me, no return to the salesman except reputation.

Tell him that A New Novelist can’t afford a whole bottle just to smell pretty until after the critics begin—then he may need it.

I hope you think the first no. is as good as it could have been made. You see each no. is a problem; I solved the 1st several different ways and this was the best. Each no. presents another problem—the fifth the most difficult. No one has had anything to say about it but me. I do it my own way and take it to Phillips and he reads it and makes only one or two slight suggestions on details which I accept or do not, as I choose; so far they have all been very helpful. Of course, he has to “pass” on each no. When it is complete I take it to the third editor and talk it over with him—he’s a great fellow and I’ve learned heaps from him.

I criticized the pictures for “Beaucaire” the other day—they were brought to the office. They were really stunning; tremendously dramatic. You should see them, and well; they will follow “The Gentleman” by a month or two. A detachment of the parade is passing, playing file & drum—another with a band, “Wearin’ o’ the green.” The streets swarm with people wearing green, and blue shadows on the asphalt—“Soldiers marching”—I must get forth to “observe”—such life & gaiety and music & shouting; I do hope the “Limerick Guards” are out today. . . . With all my love

Your grateful & affectionate Booth

Wednesday,
[March 22, 1899]

My dearest mother:

Your panic-strewn letter came last evening, and if I had not been so sorry you were in such a state of mind it would have been funny, particularly your horror that the serial should be allowed to appear—and your wishing to wire me to stop it! It was too bad of Morris Ross [Indianapolis acquaintance] to stir you up so! I am troubled that you should be troubled—but you must not bother over such utter nonsense. Can I never persuade you that I am a man of thirty—not only honest—but worldly-wise as well? You picture to yourself, always, the little, timid boy with the big nose and impertinent ears (so exposed) being pitched upon and buf-feted and torn by huge, designing men—but the reality is a “rather foxy” gentleman no longer in his first youth, who has had more experience of the world (thanks to his family) than most people you know and who has studied his profession and the ways of getting on in it very hard, and who knows more about it than any other person of your acquaintance. By the way, ask Ovid [Jameson, his lawyer brother-in-law] if he thinks as a purely business proposition, your plan of having Haute come on to tell Mr. McC. that he had a “bad reputation and couldn’t afford to keep it” [the serial] would be just the thing. Somehow, that doesn’t exactly appeal to me.

All this on account of a suggestion of the flightiest man in town! Poor Morris knows as much about it as he does about literature! . . . Of course Mr. [W. C.] Bobbs would publish it now—so would Scribner’s—because it’s been advertised as a serial for McG.’s. That’s why Stone & Co. . . . write to me before they’ve seen a line of my writing asking me to do a book for them this summer. Don’t you know that all the publishers in the country are going to read that serial? And the serial is good, too—and please don’t talk to people about it as you did to Mr. Ross—complaining of its having had to be cut—that inspires unfavorable criticism at once. If you understand at all the ways of controlling talk about such things, you
will feel that you must not suggest that it is not as good as the book—to say anything is not as good as something else condemns the first utterly in this line. Only say it is a shorter version and don't say that too often or plaintively. Say it is a "triumph of technical skill in literary manipulation."... Don't you see that whether you are successful or not, you are twice as apt to be if you make people think you are—and here are you practically agreeing with an outsider who has wheels in his head that what is a great triumph and a success for me is a mistake and a failure....

I've no doubt that Scribner's would have taken the unspeakable if all the chapters had been altered—by another author. And as for advertising, B. & M. take two pages sometimes—usually one—on the advertising leaves of three or four magazines for several months. McC.'s circulation is 400,000 now—B. & M. Co. don't compare very hugely with this; 10 full pages of "Gentleman from Indiana" is 4,000,000 a month; in the six months it is 24,000,000 pages—regard that as advertising. Also, the McC. syndicate writes which many hundreds-thousand[s of] people each month have all had items about it in N.Y. correspondence. Everybody understands that a serial always appears in book-form—how many [people] does one hear saying, "I'll wait for the book—don't care to read serials."

The first chapter & the book-covers have already been made into a dummy, and an agent is on the way to San Francisco to show the book-sellers what it's like to prepare for the October book sale—the magazine advertises it then in book-form of course. Can you mention a book that was injured! by appearing as a serial? [Du Maurier's] "Treby" for instance? You remember nearly everything of Mr. Howells first appears in serial form.... I hate so to think of your worrying, my dear, when everything goes so well with me.... Don't bother about my clothes, etc. I keep them pressed and they look very nice. I'll let you know about $ later; I have been bountifully supplied all winter, never feeling bothered about it—being rich, in fact, and always having a bone in the cupboard. I weighed 165 in lightest clothes & shoes the other day—the weather is beautiful—my greatest love to all. Yr. grateful and affectionate Booth.

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Thursday

[March 29, 1899]

Dearest People:

Haven't written because of lack of time. Went to McC.'s Sunday morning; there were Mrs. Strong & Boutet de Monvel & Mr. & Mrs. Will H. Low [artist and illustrator]—a very interesting day.... Low told of Stevenson's Barbizon days and Mrs. Strong & I talked of him for three hours—and Low talked of Henry James, they're intimate friends—and of Du Maurier. It was odd to hear him and Mrs. Strong & Mrs. Low and McClure talking of "Louisa," and "Henry" and "poor George." At ten I brought de Monvel back to town—he's a beautiful fellow, but as he cannot speak a word of English our little journey was hardly notable for a flux of conversation. I saw him safely on a car for the Waldorf and went myself to a late soiree at a Mrs. Gillig's—she was a Miss Amy Crocker of California and is very rich; she knew Uncle Newton & Mrs. Egerton (?) but she's not a particularly nice person, I think. It's a wonderful house with an oriental room to cloy the eye-dreams of Hauté—and Jap. servants in livery and fine marbles & tapestries; there were about thirty people: a composer of comic opera, three Grand Opera singers, Leo Ditrichstein, Barlow, the nonsense man who wrote "Davy & the Goblin"... Marie Dressler, the Casino burlesquer, Woodruff, the actor Anna Gould made notorious; Nat Goodwin, who told some funny stories, a Rough Rider in evening dress & his cups, a horse-auctioneer who recited Canadian dialect poetry, and I, who sang D[anny]. D[ever]. & "The Levee." It was rather a fast crowd, entertaining to behold about once; I came away early, at 9:30—the first to leave, and rose at seven, pretty sleepy, to go to New Haven....

At McClure's office most of today & yesterday, working. Fourth & Fifth Installments passed with no suggestions—only approval—by Phillips. Please do not abuse these people to me—read B. Shaw and try to act like a Man. N.Y. isn't a league of crime to persecute N. B. T. Phillips is one of the nicest and has "more sense than almost anybody"—he's made bully suggestions. It's limited to six no.'s for the best of reasons—the fall book sale opens in Oct.—nobody reads serials lasting over six months nowadays—the space in the mag. after Oct. had already been arranged for. Don't you suppose they want to do the very best they can for the story? They've given me an extraordinary amount of space in each no.—

27 I have deleted a long account of Turgeniev's week-end visit with his cousin.
more than any other writer ever had, I think—I'm not sure—65,000 words—that's longer than the average novel. McClure groaned more than I did over what I had to cut—and once, looking over my shoulder as I was bodily removing a chapter, he burst out: "Leave it in! Leave it in! That can't go out—take 13,000 words in that number."

I was weighed yesterday—165; it was 14.5 at the Everett... 

Your grateful and affectionate 

Booth

Wednesday, 
[March 29, 1899]

Dearest People—

Was weighed on a slot machine in short overcoat this morning—170, most it ever went to! Had on those heavy shoes, however, so my weight [was] probably about 130... 

I'm working pretty at [sic] stiff gait—mas of book and serial at same time. Spent long and intensely [interesting?] evening with Mrs. Strong Monday; no one else there—she's very patriotic about Indiana, which is nice. This evening I escort her to reception at Kenyon Cox's—hope I shan't have to talk much to Kenyon—he's the most difficult man to talk to I ever saw.

This just a scrawl to holler "All Well" and take keer o'yerselves.

Yr. 
Grateful & all fec. 
Booth

Thursday, 
[March 30, 1899]

Dearest People—

It is so early in the morning—not yet nine—and my eyes are so sticky and my mind so befogged with tags & reminants of dreams that I thought I would take my pen in hand and write you a few lines to say all [sic] well and love to all enquires friend, the weather here being very sunny and beautiful and hoping you have the same, fearful, however, that the contrary is true—a letter from father speaking of snow.

Glad to see how Hauté has gained in weight—John's photograph gives her 50 or 60 lbs. more than when I left. Maybe it is because she has digested so much heavy matter at her clubs. At any rate

it is nice to have a stout, bony sister—I always wanted one like that, with such a firm tread, too... 

Very interesting evening, last; I "drove" Mrs. Strong up to the Coxes' in a hansom; we passed the Windsor hotel where a great crowd still watches the workmen dig for bodies and some of the ruins still smokes.13 It's a gruesome sight at night—the great tragic heap with the swarm of black ants with pick & shovel by flameau & torchlight.

I had an embarrassing moment at the Coxes—Mrs. S. was borne away, when we came in, and I was left with Mrs. Cox in the middle of the room, and she exclaimed in clarion tones (she's a terrible flatterer—and thinks it makes things smooth): "They tell me you are the very latest thing—the new great man." All the rest were sitting around the wall, we held the stage, they all looked up; I didn't know any of them. Figure out what you would do under like circumstances. I had previously, on two occasions, found Mrs. Cox quite as difficult to talk to as her husband. Bush Browning [a boyhood friend] embarrassed never looked shiftier or more like a disconcerted pickpocket than I did at that moment.

My wretched and fluttering eye fell upon a round little man by the fire—it was Louis N. [E.] Shipman [magazine writer], and my body followed my eye and fell upon his neck; he was a soul that I had met and he seemed as glad to recognize me as I him. He began immediately to talk of "The Gentleman" which he "understood was really a great thing." It makes me a little afraid—nearly all the literary & art people here are looking out for the book, and they've heard it is good. It's better to have a thing slightly undervalued beforehand, usually, though it's important that people should talk about it.

Pretty soon Mrs. Jaccaci came in with Bartlett, the sculptor, and we got together and had a delightful evening. Mrs. J. said J. was either in Sicily, Greece or England. She was a little hurt, I think, because I had dined there twice without calling, but I explained that I had understood J. to say her day was the first Sunday of the month when it is really any Sunday except the first— I was waiting for Easter. She's a delightful [sic] person—we had a long talk and she asked me to dine twice more—tomorrow night and Wednesday. Tuesday I call on the Morse's ("Century" people) with Mrs. Quigg and dine again with her—and tonight I am going

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13 The hotel burned in mid-afternoon on March 17 as thousands of spectators who had gathered to watch the St. Patrick's Day parade obstructed the fire-fighting. Thirty-two persons were killed in the fire and forty-five others were listed as missing on March 18.
again to Mrs. Strong's. I like Mrs. S. better & better. Seven or eight people stayed for late supper at the Coxe's—and heaven help me! I sat between Kenyon and Mrs. Cox. I made another hideous struggle to talk to him, failed miserably and talked across him to a good fellow on the other side. Cox has a terrible disfigurement on one side of his face—maybe paralysis but [it] has more the appearance of an accident; possibly it makes him more difficult.

I must get to my tasks—not unpleasant ones, the final going over is most interesting—and let McC.'s have some more ms.

Be healthy and you will be happy—with great love
Yr grateful & affectionate
Booth.

Tuesday Morning
[April 4, 1899]

Dearest people—

Drafts for $15 & $33 received and with many, many thanks—only I don't want you to be stealing from yourselves to give me—I feel as if I had your spring clothes.

It is bright, sunny spring weather—has been for a week. The Easter parade on the Avenue was wonderful. Ives & I took a long stroll at noon—just starting at faces & costumes.

A beautiful tie & box of stockings from Hewett on Easter; all my thanks for it; they make me sorry that socks are not worn on the head. They came in “just right.”

I hear the work is a-calling; so accept my love with this brief note. This afternoon I call on the Morse's with Mrs. Quigg & dine with her—tomorrow night Mrs. Seton Thompson's after dinner. Sunday I go calling with Mrs. Jacaqui and sup with her Monday Mrs. Strong's again.

Saw the four paintings for "Beaucaire" yesterday at McClure's and they are stunning. The heroine is not made very beautiful but better than that, in a way. I wish you could see the two pictures of the fight—I haven't seen so much life in any illustrations for years. They take one's breath; there are two of "Beaucaire's" defense near the coach—one of the "onset" and another after he is dismounted. I'd give a good deal to own them—they're big things...

See ad in April McC.

Take keer o'yerselves and keep as well as
Yr grateful & affectionate
Booth.

Thursday,
[April 18, 1899]

Dearest People—

The very loveliest day of the spring—but I'll not go out—I have to work too hard. To get the proper feeling from this statement you must imagine it said (not) with a snuffle—but with heart-rending resignation. If I work very very hard, I may be able to carry out my plan of leaving here the first week in May. I said, you remember, that if the work took 3 months I should stay 5 months. I ought to have taken over three. You seem to think I am putting in the time frivolous. I doubt your thinking so when you see the ms I bring home. The "going about" I have done and am doing is with people who start books rolling.... I have not danced once or gone to any purely social game. My making friends with Mrs. Strong, the Jaccacis, the Doubledays, Thompsons, etc. is not likely to result in waste of time, nor am I in great danger of overdoing—getting to be the stalest latest thing; for I own it is a shock when "even father" I writes me to come home. It is only that I could never (and never hope to) convince one of you that I am a person of discretion, or that I know the best thing to do for myself... or that I see things with a clear head.... Take keer o'yerselves as well as I take care of myself—

Your grateful and affectionate
Booth

Apr 13/99. 10

Thursday.

Dear Father:

All right—pretty soon. [A self-caricature of Tarkington on his way home to Indianapolis; see reproduction.]

Affectionately,
Booth

10 The date is in Judge Tarkington's hand. This letter is written on one of the blank pages of a brief letter from the Judge to his son, in which he wrote: "Come home! The flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come... And the voice of the turtle is heard in the land."
Soon after the first of May Tarkington finished his business in New York and departed for Indianapolis. The May issue of McClure's Magazine preceded him, and he returned to his home town to find his novel the topic of much discussion. No longer was Judge Tarkington accused of supporting in idleness a writer-son whose stories no editor wanted. When the serial was completed and the book appeared in the autumn, The Gentleman from Indiana became a modest best seller and a springboard to fortune.
An Editor in Pursuit of Booth Tarkington
BY BARTON CURRIE

HAVING four guises to support in recording an intimate contact with Booth Tarkington over the greater part of a generation, I had better disclose all four roles at the beginning; first, as an admiring reader from *The Gentleman from Indiana* onward; second, as magazine editor seeking and at last gaining the privilege of publishing many of his writings; third, as book collector who enjoyed the mania of making a comprehensive collection of all his literary efforts in their first issue stage which enabled me to compile a bibliography of his first thirty years as an author; fourth, as a friend of one for whom my great fondness never slackened.

A well-known critic in his latest (1953) book declares: "In America," as Hamlin Garland said, 'no man and no thing endures for more than a generation'; and where there is no collective memory, all thought is for the 'here and now,' with one vague eye directed towards the future, where the immediate, the pragmatic, is the universal concern, writers are forgotten like snowflakes when they fall."

How easy it is for some of the writing folk who specialize in making scientific analyses of heaps of books a week to furbish and refurbish a cliche. How easy it is for them to forget the dimensions or kinds of reading publics that determine the fates of those who devote their lives to literature of one sort or another. Everyone who has edited magazines and newspapers or who has published books knows that the critical verdicts of reviewers are very often as unreliable as prophecies as the blind guesses of smart businessmen. The book reading public is split up into many diverse groups. There is the prosperous minority that buys freely and lavishly on the say-so of its favorite bookseller. There is another not so prosperous group that is influenced by critical reviews and advertisements. A third group rather difficult to estimate obtains most of its reading from lending and public libraries. Of increasing importance is that quite modern new group that is supplied by the book clubs that seem to be constantly growing in number. Nearly every big city newspaper has a book-selecting columnist nowadays and there is a small multitude of men and women performing the same service for radio and television. If you gather all these various assists to book selling within one focus, it would seem that we have almost reached a golden age for the author, the publisher, and the critic. I doubt very much if any of them would admit it.

The trillions (if you calculate by gossip and rumor) poured into the laps of Hollywood's favorite authors fill the dreams not only of all the fiction-writing folk in this hemisphere but fire the yearnings for such plunder in the breasts of all the professional scribblers throughout the world.

In practically every phase of authorship I can think of Booth Tarkington was involved for not one generation only but for the greater part of two. He wrote *Monsieur Beaucaire* in 1897, then laid it aside while he finished *The Gentleman from Indiana*. Subsequently, both novels were immediate successes when published as serials and books in 1899 and 1900 by S. S. McClure. In my last letter from Booth Tarkington, dated February 17, 1945, a little over a year before he died, he wrote: "I'll be sending you a new novel soon—story of an art museum in a midland town..."

This book was *Image of Josephine*, his last finished novel. Ten days after I received the letter the book came to my home at Bala-Cynwyd inscribed "For Barton Currie affly from Booth Tarkington February 27, 1945, Indianapolis, author's copy, just arrived. This is one." An unfinished novel, *The Snow Piece*, with a preface by his wife, Susannah Tarkington, who played an enormously important sustaining part in enabling him to carry on with his writing and other vital interests in spite of threatened blindness and other ailments, was published in 1947. Certainly Tarkington's faith in his ability to write and please his still large following remained undiminished almost to the day he died at the age of seventy-six.

Critic Van Wyck Brooks in his *The Writer in America*, which ignores the existence of any Indiana author save Theodore Dreiser, concerning whom he quotes "some critics" as saying he will not be read in another generation, declares balefully, "Let the best writer cease to produce for a decade and he is as dead as mutton to the critical mind..."

To the best of my recollection, supported by an examination of the records, there was no period longer than six months within a span of forty-eight years when Tarkington failed to produce, notwithstanding his two-year-long ordeal during which he completely lost the sight of one eye after an operation, and then later went back for another partially successful operation on the other eye,
The Plutocrat, published in 1897, was the next-to-last novel he wrote by hand. He made me very proud and very happy when he gave me this manuscript of his after its serial publication in The Ladies' Home Journal. Unless I am mistaken, his doctors urged him not to undertake anything longer than a page or so of letter writing after he had finished The Plutocrat, and after one more novel, ClaireAmbler, he dictated all his novels, short stories, plays, and articles.

Booth Tarkington's writing career was a denial of the snap-judgments or ill-will judgments of those critics who enjoyed classifying him as a low-rated popular idol of the slick-paper magazines. Imported realism with all manner of sex undertones and overtones (the looser and lower the better) was crowding its way into the best-seller lists as the boiling twenties rushed on their way to the crash of twenty-nine. Authors who failed to join up were guilty of a perverted snobbery. Tarkington was judged to belong to the all-passion-spent fuddy-duddies whose books were no longer even worth reviewing by moderns or intellectuals.

Curiously enough, somewhat earlier a leading newspaper had sent out many thousands of copies of a questionnaire in order to discover who were regarded as the ten leading living men in America. In the replies received Charles Evans Hughes, Henry Ford, and Thomas Edison led the list. The only American writer mentioned in the first ten was Booth Tarkington. It was to be expected that the progressive young realists would retort that the only votes accepted in this poll came from fat cats of big business, old fagies, and old women. "Time Marches On!" shouted the new-timers. Sinclair Lewis was not fooled by such claptrap as a Pulitzer Prize when it was awarded him for his Arrowsmith in 1926; he would not be misled by such outworn symbols of approval from the capitalists as Tarkington was in 1919 and 1922 when he accepted Pulitzer Prizes for his The Magnificent Ambersons and Alice Adams. The same admirers of Lewis who lauded him for his school-boy prettiness are lamenting today, "Have we not seen Sinclair Lewis tossed away like an old shoe because his work had deteriorated in certain respects?" No mention was made of the Nobel Prize award (thirty-thousand dollars worth), which Lewis accepted with an oration chiefly distinguished by additional bars of criticism of his homefolks and homeland that delighted his foreign audience.

It was fifteen years after I had begun reading Booth Tarkington's books that I first met him. As associate editor of The Country Gentleman, recently purchased by Cyrus H. K. Curtis, I sought Tarkington out in the Players Club in New York to persuade him to write a bit of anything for the C.G. I failed in my quest as he was way behind in fulfilling orders he had from several magazines, including The Saturday Evening Post. He wondered if I had consulted the editor of the Post before coming to him. I had not and on my return to Philadelphia I learned from George H. Lorimer, who was the Curtis executive who had hired me after Mr. Curtis had bought The Country Gentleman, that butting in on a fellow editor's pet authors was absolutely taboo in Independence Square.

Between this episode and my next meeting with Tarkington there was an interval of five or six years and it was during this interval that he produced The Turmoil, The Magnificent Ambersons, and Alice Adams, three books that really established him as a literary somebody even among the most liberalized pundits of criticism. Quite a few were a trifle condescending in pointing out that there was a great difference between a mere best seller and a work of artistic merit.

A few years before I was switched from the editorship of The Country Gentleman to take charge of The Ladies' Home Journal a misunderstanding occurred between Mr. Lorimer and Booth Tarkington that resulted in Booth's sending all his manuscripts to publications other than the Post. As soon as I was fully aware of this I obtained sanction to bring back to the Curtis fold a greatly missed author.

Beginning early in the spring of 1918 I wrote a number of letters to Tarkington asking for an interview at his Indianapolis home, where in a short time I was most cordially received. He was overburdened with orders and commitments at the time but I managed to interest him in a venture I had made in the Journal to publish a series of one-act plays for amateurs by well-known playwrights and authors and offer them to readers of the magazine for amateur production free of royalty charges. An individual or a group need only write to the editor for consent to produce. I had already made a good start in the experiment with one play from A. A. Milne called The Man in the Bowler Hat and two from Roland Pertwee, Evening Dress Indispensable and The Loveliest Thing. The idea made an immediate appeal to Booth, who ultimately supplied me with five of these little plays, beginning with The Gnome Story, and following along with The Trysting Place, Bimbo, the Pirate, The Travellers, and Station YYYY.
There follows a little batch of correspondence revealing an editor's machinations (good machinations this time) on behalf of his magazine that led to a fine success with the one-act plays, the capture of a very successful novel, and then for six or seven years after a considerable number of distinguished short stories. There were also a number of articles and forewords for various purposes and then The Plutocrat, of which William Lyon Phelps had this to say shortly after its publication in 1917: "The Magnificent Ambersons' and 'The Midlander' are good, especially from the historical point of view, but 'Alice Adams' and 'The Plutocrat' are better, very much better. The former is a tragedy, a more deeply moving American tragedy than the tedious chronicle of a nincompoop. It is honest, sincere, unflinching, but there is no sacrifice of beauty and charm in the style... The descriptions in 'The Plutocrat' are as admirable as the characterization and the implied satire, for the book is full of overtones. No better description of seasickness has ever been written... The cheerful vulgarities of the plutocrat receive due attention, but the qualities that made him a plutocrat are shown with equal clearness and emphasis. All foreigners should read this book in order that they may realize who are the real dollar-chasers."

BOOTH TARKINGTON TO BARTON CURRIE

Seawood, Kennebunkport, Maine, November 9, 1921

This would play long enough, I believe. I think we reckon about a minute to the type-written page, and the ensemble "chorus" talk and dancing would add to the time. It is elastic, could be played short or long. There is a question about the drop of the curtain taking the place of the body of the ghost story. I think the "leaving all that to the imagination" is a better effect, but of course the story can be supplied and injected, if you think better.

Wires from N.Y. and a telephone call from Miss [Billie] Burke & Ziegfeld convey the cheerful prognostication that "The Intimate Strangers" is a hit.

BARTON CURRIE TO BOOTH TARKINGTON

November 12, 1921

"The Ghost Story" I like from all angles. Good reading and ought to have the widest sort of appeal to amateurs to put on. We can get it in the March issue very nicely unless the artist breaks his arm.
I'm putting through a payment of $3000.00. Our checks go out
Fridays and by next Friday you will have left "Seawood." Shall
I send it to Indianapolis?
Hope I can see you in New York next Wednesday or Thursday.

BARTON CURRIE TO BOOTH TARKINGTON

May 10, 1922

I noticed almost immediately after my return that the young
dramatists are putting on "The Ghost Story" all over the map.
Schools, colleges, churches, V.M.C.A.'s, the young Hebrews, even
the young . . . intellectuals of the South are clamoring for permis-
sion to produce. So far we have granted 175 requests and they are
still coming in strong every day. Also they are writing in to tell us
how big a success it was. I enclose one of these thank you letters.
We have sufficient proof now to establish that the experiment
is a big success and I think your second play is going to pull even
better than "The Ghost Story." I suppose that you have already
guessed that this is all leading up to a request for a third to follow
along sometime early next year. And really you should have a
third for a book, which ought to go wonderfully well as we really
have nothing now between covers that is in the same class with
these two plays you have already done. . . .
Probably before you get this letter you will have been bothered
by one of our staff writers, John R. McMahon. He set out for
Indianapolis last Sunday. I asked him, if possible, to have a little
interview and provide us with a personality sketch to be run in
the Journal. He was one of our best producers on The Country
Gentleman and has also done some very good work on the
Journal. . . .
While I have had my vacation, I am going to tear loose for
a few days to get up to Kennebunkport. Kahler came in the
other day. . . . I haven't seen Kenneth Roberts lately, but crossed
his trail many times on the other side. I had a great trip, replete
with interest, and not lacking in thrills. . . .

BOOTH TARKINGTON TO BARTON CURRIE

1100 North Pennsylvania Street, Indianapolis, Indiana,
May 19, 1922

I thank you ever so much for your letter. We all liked Mr. Mc-
Mahon immensely, and enjoyed his visit here.
We are just on the run to Kennebunkport and hope that you
and Mrs. Currie are planning a longer stay there this year, and
that you will be up there before long.

Glad the little play went nicely and I imagine that I can do
another when you want it.

BARTON CURRIE TO BOOTH TARKINGTON

May 19, 1922

Here are a few more thank you letters. Notice what a great
hit your story has made with the Epworth League. They have
asked me to repeat on May 23 and May 24.

When I get McMahon’s article and publish it, can I say anything
about the next novel? Or is it too far in the future in your plans?

I noticed an announcement in current McCall’s that you were to
write a series of short stories for them. This makes me almost wish
I hadn’t gone to Europe, but remained here to hypnotize you into
doing the same for us. This reveals my envious disposition. If the
matter of price rather than charm of personality is involved in
these things, I wish you would give me a chance to bid, as I am
willing to tell the world that I take more personal pride in
publishing your work than that of any other writer of the present
time.

You may see me tearing up to Kennebunkport before a great
while in a new car of somewhat familiar design and of the bifur-
cated limousine pattern. In some sections they are known as
Henry coupes but out our way they call them hen coops.

BOOTH TARKINGTON TO BARTON CURRIE

Seawood, Kennebunkport, Maine, June 4, 1922

Still getting “settled in” but pause to thank you for your letter
and the enclosures. I believe “The Ghost Story” must be a grand
play. My reason is that any play given three times by the Epworth
League with an audience present the latter two times—well.
The series for McCall’s rather happened—five stories, not con-
ected.

I have to do a little work this summer—probably a play and a
couple of short stories all that’ll be new—and “retouching” 8
plays already done. Probably I’ll not begin the novel until I go
back to Indpls. I’m saving the winter & spring for it—though as
we’ll probably return earlier than usual, I may be able to “get
going” in Nov.—and it’s possible I may begin the writing here.

Depends on how much bother the putting on of some plays’ll be.
The novel is really begun—mentally—of course—but I try to keep
it vague. Only let certain “broad generalizations” concerning it
take shape, & even these I keep from assuming the definiteness
of words as long as I can. The only definite words about it would
declare that it will follow “Alice Adams,” “The Magnificent
Ambersons,” “The Turmoil” in general character. And of course
it will try to be an advance beyond those books in both thought
& texture.

Hope you’ll be up before long. This is the heavy mosquito
season. Mr. Chas. Lascelles, of our small retinue, (not related to
the Royal Fambly of England evidently, as he is sometimes intel-
ligent, as Princess Maud’s Lascelles never could be: I once knew
him) says of mosquitoes: “I don’t mind jest their bitin’; but they
eat so!”

Yours, partly eaten. . . .

BARTON CURRIE TO BOOTH TARKINGTON

June 7, 1922

Many thanks for your letter. It is mighty cheering to me to
learn that we will probably have the new book [The Midlander]
for next year. McMahon turned in a bulky sketch of you and as
soon as I have worked it over a little and get a galley I will send
it up for your approval. We are leading our September issue with
“The Trystring Place” and I want to run McMahon’s sketch in
October or November, together with a brief announcement that
you are at work on your new book and that we will have it for the
Journal.

Mrs. Currie and I plan to motor up to Kennebunkport about
the middle of July. I will only have ten days for the whole trip but
think I can make the run from Philadelphia in two days, so that
would give us about a week at Kennebunkport. . . .

In addition to 180 stationary groups of producers for putting on
“The Ghost Story” the Community Service organization of Cin-
cy

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nati asked permission to put it on in a truck, a portable theatre
which they are conveying around from district to district in the
Ohio metropolis. They do not say how many performances they
will give but sort of guarantee that 1500 will observe each produc-
tion and that there will be no charge. I thought you might be
interested in this. . . .

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So much for pertinent correspondence covering the term of my employment with the Curtis Publishing Company. My close association with Tarkington extended nearly eighteen years beyond that period and he became a treasured friend of many of the later and happier years. A year-long illness and retirement from my job paved the way to sufficient leisure not only to see a great deal more of him but to read all his writings and to begin a serious effort to compile a bibliography of everything he had attempted in the field of literature.

ADDITIONS TO THE TARKINGTON BIBLIOGRAPHY

The following list of additions to A Bibliography of Booth Tarkington, by Dorothy R. Russo and Thelma L. Sullivan, published by the Indiana Historical Society in 1949, has been compiled largely with the assistance of Mrs. Russo, James Woodress, and Brandt & Brandt.

First Editions

Books

The Gentleman from Indiana (1899). The description of the second state should read: p. 245, line 12, as in state 1; p. 245, line 16, her heart (earlier, so pretty); p. 251, line 7, a square brow (earlier, brawny bump); p. 34 as in state 1. An extract from chapter 7 (entitled by the editor "The Circus Parade") has been reprinted in Types and Techniques in English Composition, edited by Frederick A. Manchester, New York, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc. (1951), pp. 508-509. Monseur Beaussaire (1900). A copy catalogued by Charles S. Beets, Catalogue 20 (Nov., 1949), item 289, bears the statement "First Copy 4/30/1900" written on the end paper and signed with the initials of a man who worked for the publishers at the time. Curiously, it has the larger Gilliss Press seal. Apparently it was an advance copy: it has a misplaced plate, a streak on the title-page, a bad hyphen on p. 31, and a blurred outline in the cover stamping (perhaps a trial run bound in a discarded cover and still open for alterations)—Whitman Bennett's comment). It would take more copies, sold and circulated, to make it more than just a puzzle as to why the large seal appeared here instead of the small one of the first issue. The Two Panaceas (1901). Errors p. 12, line 9, col. 2 (later editions, col.; p. 94, line 8, gesturing (later editions, gestulating).


Seventeen (1916). Chapter 8 ("June") was reprinted in Chucklehead: Funny Stories for Everyone, selected by Margaret C. Sorgin, New York, A. A. Knopf, 1916, pp. 41-52. A musical comedy version, book by Sally Benson, music by Walter Kent, lyrics by Kim Gannon, had its New York premiere at the Broadhurst Theatre, June 21, 1931. It was based on the dramatization by Hugh S. Stange and Stannard
Mears, in collaboration with Stuart Walker, published in 1954. The music was published by the Leeds Music Corporation of New York in 1951. An "original cast" recording has been issued by RCA Victor (LOC 999). The play and the vocal score were published by Samuel French, Inc. in 1954.


The Magnificent Ambersons (1958), Chapters 1, 3, and 12 were reprinted in Howier Garnav; A Treasury of Indian Life and Love, selected with comment, by R. E. Banta, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1951. Pp. 549-571; a brief critical sketch, pp. 547-549.


The Show Price (1957). Published in London by Hammond, Hammond & Company in 1951. Your Amiable Uncle, Letters to his Nephews by Booth Tarkington. Illustrated with his Original Sketches, Indianapolis, New York, The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc. [1940]. 194 pp. The frontispiece is a reproduction of a portrait of Tarkington by Ernest H. Blumenschein, "painted in the year these letters were written." First edition as stated on copyright page. One thousand numbered copies, signed by John T. Jameson, Donald Jameson and Booth T. Jameson, were issued as the "Hooiser Edition." The only difference between the "Hooiser Edition" and the trade edition is the limitation label pasted to the half-title of the volumes comprising the former. Reproduced on this leaf is a photograph of the Tarkington house at the corner of Eleventh and Pennsylvania Streets, Indianapolis. According to the publisher, the first, and only printing of Your Amiable Uncle consisted of 7,000 copies (including the 1,000 copies of the "Hooiser Edition").

EPHEMERA


PLAYS

The "James Brothers: or Life and Death of Jesse James" was given at "Tarkington's Grand Opera House" on June 10, 1924, according to a notice of this date in The Saturday Review (Indianapolis).

"The Man on Horseback" was produced by James K. Hackett during the fifth and sixth weeks of his 1912 season in San Francisco at the Columbia Theater beginning August 19.

CONTRIBUTIONS


Memoir of The Occasion Celebrating Percy MacKay's 70th Birthday On The Evening of Friday March 26, 1943. (New York, National Arts Club, 1945.) Contains a tribute by Tarkington, p. 5.

ILLUSTRATIONS

The Bric-a-Brac, 1894. The Illustration by Tarkington on p. 24 for the Missouri Club is reprinted in The Bric-a-Brac of the Class of '95, p. 222.

About Booth Tarkington

BOOKS, PAMPHLETS, LEAFLETS

Davis, Parke Hill. The History of the Class of '93 of Princeton University, New York, Pendegrass Press, 1895. Contains references to Tarkington.


PERIODICALS

America


American Literature


The Baton of Phi Beta Fraternity

1945, March, pp. 10-11. "Booth Tarkington, Pi Beta." Bulletin of Wesleyan College (Georgia)

Periodicals Containing First Appearances

*Atlanta Journal*
- 1913, June, p. 12. [A telegram read at the first annual dinner of the Friends of the Princeton Library, in New York, April 14, 1913.]

*The Bookman*

*Everybody's Magazine*

*The Indianapolis Journal*
- 1892, April 21. "Brotherhood."

*The Indianapolis News*
- 1900, January 8. [Three letters to Elisa Browning, Indianapolis librarian, about the selection of names to be carved on new library building, dated July 20, August 1, and September 4, 1906.]

*The Indianapolis Sentinel*
- 1901, October 8. [One-hundred-word telegram to paper after opening of Moniteur Beaucroire.]

*The Indianapolis Star*
- 1935, November 18. [Tarkington's answer on receipt of gold medal from National Institute of Arts and Letters.]
- 1945, November 27. [Letter from Kennebunkport, Maine, urging hard peace for Germany.]

*Princeton Alumni Weekly*
- 1921, March 29, p. 228. "Mr. Tarkington's Withdrawal." An undated letter to the editor in which Tarkington withdraws as a nominee for alumni trustee of Princeton University.

*The Tiger*
- 1890, December 1, p. 54. "There Once Was a Merry Young Soph." 

*Vanity Fair*
- 1934, April, p. 17. [Part of a letter to Condé Nast.]

**COLLECTOR'S CHOICE**

William H. Scheide '36 lent to the Library for exhibition during October, as the first "Collector's Choice" of the current academic year, the only known fragment of an edition of Aelius Donatus' Latin grammar, printed by Johann Fust and Peter Schoeffer about 1455, before they completed the printing of the 42-line or "Gutenberg" Bible. Donatus was a Latin grammarian and commentator on Terence who lived in the fourth century A.D.; his grammar (*De octo partitibus orationis*) was a standard textbook of the Middle Ages and Renaissance and was one of the books most frequently reprinted in the fifteenth century. This unique fragment of two leaves, which formed originally part of a book of ten leaves, with thirty-three lines of text per page, was discovered in the binding of a book printed in Basel in 1479.¹

The "Collector's Choice" for November consisted of a selection of books "From a Preceptor's Library." "One of the best ways I know to become an amateur book collector," wrote Professor Willard Thorp, from whose library the twelve books in the exhibit came, "is to be a preceptor at Princeton. When you have served several years as a preceptor you are certain to have taught in a number of courses. If you try to keep abreast of them, as you should, you are bound to accumulate books—first editions, sometimes, or editions which eventually prove to be valuable for one reason or another, and unusual by-the-way items. Knowing your interests, kind friends (former students among them) bestow books on you. Publishers are shrewdly generous. Now and then a contemporary writer whose works you have reviewed in a fine burst of generosity sends you his newest novel or volume of verse with a handsome, if undeserved, inscription. And so, if you are around long enough, you will own an inconveniently large library with some collector's items scattered through it. I intend that the Princeton University Library shall possess them someday but for the present it would be a kind of sacrilege to hand them over. Too much of your life at Princeton adheres to them." Included in the exhibit were a presentation copy of Cardinal Newman's anonymously published novel *Loss and Gain*, London, 1846; Christina Rossetti's *Goblin Market* and other poems, London, 1862, with a presentation inscription from Charles Kingsley to his wife; and first editions of Gerard Manley Hopkins, Walt Whitman, James Joyce, Melville, Dryden, T. S. Eliot, and Henry James.

A selection of editions from the *Aucassin en Nicolette* collection of Alfred C. Howell formed the "Collector's Choice" for December. The *chantefable* of *Aucassin en Nicolette*, composed in the late twelfth or early thirteenth century by an unknown minstrel of northern France, is one of the most charming love-tales of romantic literature. It is of interest because of its unusual literary form—an alternation of sections of prose and verse, with musical notations as a score for the verse—and because of the subtlety of its treatment of a familiar theme. *Aucassin et Nicolette* has survived in a single manuscript, written in the Picard dialect, which is now in the Bibliothèque Nationale. Since its first publication in the eighteenth century, the manuscript has been known to students of medieval French literature. The exemplar was a manuscript which had been owned by the French scholar, Father Richard de Lalande, and was later acquired by a member of the French nobility. The text was subsequently acquired by an English collector and later by the British Museum. The collection of *Aucassin en Nicolette* was acquired by the Library in 1920, and the manuscript was later acquired by the Library in 1933.

century it has appeared in over two hundred editions, has been translated and retranslated into at least ten different languages, and has been adapted for many purposes. Mr. Howell's selection included the first French edition (Paris, 1756); two editions of Andrew Lang's famous translation, the first (London, 1887) and the Ashendene Press edition of 1900; and the first American edition (Boston, 1875), a translation by Edward Everett Hale.

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

JAMES WOODRUFF, Associate Professor of English at Butler University, is currently a visiting lecturer at Duke University. He is the author of Howells and Italy (1952) and of a biography of Booth Tarkington which is to be published by Lippincott this spring.

BAXTON CURRIE was the editor of The Ladies' Home Journal from 1900 to 1928. He published in 1931 an account of his experiences as a book collector, entitled Fishers of Books, and in the following year brought out a bibliography of the writings of Booth Tarkington.

THOMAS W. STREETER, one of the foremost collectors of Americana, is President of the American Antiquarian Society and Treasurer of the New-York Historical Society.

MINA R. BRYAN is an Associate Editor of The Papers of Thomas Jefferson.

J. BENJAMIN TOWNSEND '90, on the faculty of the Woman's College of the University of North Carolina, is a Visiting Fellow of the Department of Art and Archaeology at Princeton University.
PRINCETON'S MASON AND DIXON MAP

The Princeton Library has recently received as a gift of Mr. and Mrs. John H. Doran of Kingston, Pennsylvania, in memory of their son, Joseph I. Doran, II '35, an unusual example of the Plan of the Boundary Lines . . . between the Provinces of Maryland and Pennsylvania [Philadelphia, 1768], the rare and famous map recording the surveys of Messrs. Mason and Dixon which ended one of the great boundary disputes of American history.

Almost immediately after the grant of the region known as Pennsylvania to William Penn on March 4, 1686/87, Lord Baltimore was notified and it was then suggested that he appoint one or more representatives to act with agents of William Penn in making "a true division and separation of the said Provinces of Maryland and Pennsylvania, according to the bounds and degree of Northern Latitude expressed in our said Letters Patent by settling and fixing certain Land Marks where they shall appear to border upon each other."

This is not the place to record the discussions and tentative decisions of the next fifty years as to the boundary. The results were published in True Copies of I. The Agreement between Lord Baltimore and Messieurs Penn, dated 10 May 1732. II. The Commissions given to the Commissioners to mark out the Lines between Maryland, and Pennsylvania and the Three Lower Counties on Delaware. III. The Return or Report of the Commissioners on both Sides, made 2d Nov. 1733. Shewing for what Reasons the Lines were not marked out within the Time appointed for that Purpose [London? 1734?], of which copies with the map are recorded only at the Huntington and the John Carter Brown Libraries and in my collection. The agreement was finally carried out by the Mason and Dixon survey of some thirty years later, but only after prolonged legal proceedings. The first was brought by the Penns in 1735 and decided in their favor by Lord Hardwicke in 1750. The points at issue are outlined in a Breviate in the suit
filed by the Penns in 1735, of which there are copies at the John Carter Brown, Chapin, and New York Public Libraries, at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, and in my collection. Though Lord Hardwicke decided the suit in favor of the Penns, another ten years passed before the agreement of 1760, finally terminating the dispute, was executed. Mason and Dixon, who were eminent enough in their profession to have been entrusted by the Royal Society with the observation of the transit of Venus at the Cape of Good Hope in 1761, were chosen by both parties to survey and mark the boundary. It appears that their first observations were made in December, 1768, and that on January 29, 1768, they delivered their manuscript map recording the final agreement of 1760. The map was engraved at some time between the end of January and September 5, 1768, when Joseph Shippen, disbursing agent of the Penns, noted in his account book the payment of twelve pounds to James Smither for engraving the survey of the boundary lines and twenty pounds to Robert Kennedy for papers, printing, etc.

The copy acquired by Princeton is in two large sheets, one for the eastern and one for the western half of the boundary, and is thus the third known surviving example of the map as originally issued, the few other known copies having been cut and mounted in various ways. As I had one of the examples of the map in two sheets1 (the other is a rather mutilated copy at the American Philosophical Society), Mr. Dix brought Princeton's new acquisition over to Morristown for a comparison. We found that the western sheets of the two copies were the same and printed on paper with the same watermark, but that there were various minor differences between the eastern sheets and their watermarks differed. Before these differences could be checked against other copies, word came from Princeton that further examination had made it evident that the eastern sheet of the Doran copy was in manuscript and not engraved at all.

This raised the exciting question as to whether the manuscript sheet was half of one of the original sets of manuscript plans delivered by Mason and Dixon (it seems probable that more than one set was delivered), or a copy made from the engraved version. An inquiry of Mr. Doran as to the provenance of the map

1 Mr. Streeter's copies of the True Copies and the Mason and Dixon map are described in Americana—Beginnings: A Selection from the Library of Thomas W. Streeter given in honor of a visit of the Krondietha Club on May 3, 1957, Morristown, N.J., 1957, pp. 90-95—Ee.

brought out that its two sheets were acquired by Mr. Doran's father in 1864 and that its previous history was not known. There was a possible clue in that the manuscript sheet has below the title the signatures: "Chas: Mason Jer. Dixon." These signatures do not appear in the engraved version, and study showed that they are indeed the autograph signatures of Mason and Dixon. The differences between the two maps indicate the probability that the Doran manuscript preceded the engraved map; the signatures, paralleling Mason and Dixon's procedure in signing the daily entries in the two official copies of their journal, suggest that the manuscript may be part of one of the official manuscript copies.

As far as I know none of these manuscript copies of the Mason and Dixon map has survived, except possibly in part in this eastern sheet now at Princeton. How a copy of the map in part engraved and in part manuscript happened to be assembled presents a problem which none of us interested in the Mason and Dixon map has been able to solve. All of us can, however, very properly say that Princeton has a most interesting example of one of the great American maps.—THOMAS W. STREETER

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF REVISORS

The Library has recently acquired by purchase a copy of the Report of the Committee of Revisors Appointed by the General Assembly of Virginia In MDCCLXXVI, printed by Dixson & Holt in Richmond in November, 1774. Only five hundred copies of this volume were printed by an order of the Virginia General Assembly which directed that, when printed, "one [copy] shall be delivered to each member of the General Assembly, of the Executive, of the General Court, of the Courts of Chancery and Admiralty, to the Attorney General, and to each of the Delegates representing this state in Congress, and that the residue of the said copies be distributed throughout the several counties, by the Executive, in such manner as shall judge most conducive to the end proposed." The Library's copy is that which was received under this distribution by John Bowyer, the delegate to the Assembly from Rockbridge County for the session of 1774-1775 and also for that of 1785-1786, the sessions in which the bills were presented for ratification.

Although the Report was never adopted in its entirety, it is one of the great landmarks in American legal history. It was the first attempt to revise the legal structure of a commonwealth in accordance with the principles of the American Revolution. On a
motion by Thomas Jefferson, the Virginia General Assembly appointed a committee for the revival of the laws, consisting of Thomas Jefferson, Edmund Pendleton, George Wythe, George Mason, and Thomas Ludwvell Lee. This was on November 5, 1776—one year after the adoption of the Declaration of Independence—and the committee made its report to the Assembly on June 18, 1779—four years before the conclusion of the peace. The fame of the Report also rests on its “official” presentation of Thomas Jefferson’s bill for establishing religious freedom, his bills providing for public education, for the abolishing of entail, for the naturalization of foreigners—all of which conformed to Jefferson’s intention of reforming the structure of law upon a foundation that would be “truly republican.”—MINA R. BRYAN

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

From Henry E. Gerstey ‘20, who had made in the three previous years important additions to the Library’s Stevenson collection, Princeton received in the autumn of 1954 an exceptionally interesting group of Stevenson materials, mainly association items and manuscripts. Among the nine association items in Mr. Gerstey’s gift are two books presented by Stevenson to his mother: The Pentland Rising, Edinburgh, 1866 (“To Mamma from The Author”), Stevenson’s first book, published when he was only sixteen, inserted in a volume of tear sheets of twenty of Stevenson’s contributions to periodicals, apparently assembled by Mrs. Stevenson, one of which (“Forest Notes”) contains a notation in the author’s hand; and a copy of the new edition of Edinburgh, London, 1890 (“From the author to his mother”). Other presentation copies with inscriptions in Stevenson’s hand (all first editions) are An Inland Voyage, London, 1878, with a long inscription to Mr. Lachèvre; Travels with a Donkey in the Cevennes, London, 1879, presented by Stevenson to his first cousin Katherine Stevenson de Mattos; and Virginibus Puellisque, London, 1881, inscribed “E. W. G. (old style from Robert Lewis Balfour Stevenson (old style)’ and containing, tipped in, a letter concerning Stevenson from Sidney Colvin to the recipient of the volume, Edmund Gosse, February 1 [1887]. Three of the association items are books which originally formed part of Stevenson’s library. They are Family Prayers, by John R. MacDuff, London, 1858, accompanied by eight pages of manuscript notes on “Passages of Scripture to be read in connec-

tion with each other”; Joseph Currie’s edition of the Carmina of Horace, London [n. d.], with annotations and markings in Stevenson’s hand; and Alma Mater’s Mirror [Edinburgh], 1887, which contains the first printing of Stevenson’s poem “The House Beautiful.” Mr. Gerstey’s gift includes also E. J. Henley’s copy of the first edition of Deacon Brodie, by Stevenson and William Ernest Henley, printed in Edinburgh in 1880. E. J. Henley, the brother of Stevenson’s collaborator, played the lead in the play and in this copy he made many alterations in the text. Among the other volumes presented by Mr. Gerstey are the first and second collections of Moral Emblems, Davos-Platz [1886], and The South Seas, London, 1890, the copyright edition, one of only about twenty copies.

The manuscripts received from Mr. Gerstey consist of three letters written by Stevenson (to his parents, in the autumn of 1889, when he was attending a boarding school at Spring Grove, near London; to Sir Walter Simpson, Bournemouth, no date; and to George Meredith, Vailima, September 5, 1893); a cedelle to Stevenson’s will in his autograph, January 4, 1895; the draft of a contract in Stevenson’s hand for additions to his house in Samoa, accompanied by the specifications for the work on the house, written in another hand but signed by Stevenson; a single page of quotations from Franklin “concerning virtue and pleasure,” in Stevenson’s hand; and a self-portrait of Stevenson, pen and ink, signed.

THE YELLOW BOOK

In April, 1895, Oscar Wilde was arrested and brought to trial. Only a short time before he had lost a suit for slander against the Marquess of Queensberry, and the outcome of this counter-action appeared already certain. Where there had been disapproval, envy, or irritation at Wilde’s conduct, there was now fierce moral indignation. Something like a reign of terror swept bellettirist London. Linked in the minds of many with the defendant as a pander of unhealthy decadence was Aubrey Beardsley, the original and talented young artist who had illustrated Wilde’s Salome but who actually detested the author. It was in this atmosphere of suspicion and near-panic that the fifth volume of The Yellow Book was scheduled to appear. A lively, fashionable debutaute among literary magazines of the day, The Yellow Book had shown a capacity almost unequalled for eclecticism, good taste, and high quality. Few outstanding British writers or artists of the nineties—whether vitalist or aesthete, vers de société poet or harsh realist, impressionist or
Academy painter—did not at some time contribute to the quarterly. But largely because of its dazzling cover, some unconventional designs by Beardsley, and the desire of several contributors to startle, it had achieved a popular and undeserved reputation for decadence. Wilde never appeared in its pages. Since his exclusion had been at Beardsley’s insistence, what subsequently happened has always seemed incredibly unjust.

It has long been known that the cover design and drawings which Aubrey Beardsley had prepared for the April, 1895, issue of The Yellow Book were abruptly suppressed and that without explanation the celebrated black-and-white artist withdrew as its art editor to join the rival Savoy published by Leonard Smithers. Literary anecdote has also credited William Watson, the poet, with being the principal antagonist in this dramatic episode. The drastic action was clearly a gesture of appeasement to the Grundies who had placed The Yellow Book second only to Wilde’s works on their proscription list. Still, many pieces were missing from the puzzle as if there had been a conspiracy among those involved to follow the example of the three Chinese monkeys.

The Library has recently acquired, through the generosity of the Friends, a small but choice collection of documents relating to this crisis in the history of The Yellow Book. The most important item in this addition to the A. E. Gallatin collection of Beardsleyana is a dummy copy of the controversial fifth volume of the quarterly as it was originally intended to appear before Beardsley’s expulsion. This copy, formerly in the possession of Edmund Gosse, contains page proofs of William Watson’s “Hymn to the Sea” inscribed by Watson to Gosse. It also has the original cover, the title-page with a drawing of Venus in modern dress, and the four plates in proof all of which Beardsley designed, with the original table of art contents listing his contributions to the volume. When Volume V appeared late in April all of Beardsley’s work had been cancelled; no evidence of his association with the magazine remained except his tell-tale design on the back cover. None of the artist’s designs intended for the volume were objectionable, and all of them were vastly superior to the substitutions made at the last minute. Introducing the volume as it finally appeared was Watson’s sonnet “Hymn to the Sea.” A copy of the published volume is included as a companion-piece to the dummy in the Library’s new acquisition. Together they mark a dramatic turning-point in the character of The Yellow Book and an end to the heyday of fin de siècle poetry and manners. Henceforth, the quality of the art contributions to the review deteriorated badly; and, while the literary contents were less affected, they far too often exceeded the generous limits of the founders, whose aim it was to show “no prejudice against anything but dullness and incapacity.”

The Library’s dummy copy is undoubtedly unique, as probably are the proofs of Beardsley’s drawings intended for the volume. On the fly-leaf is a manuscript note by Gosse, dated January, 1896, which indicates that he personally compiled the dummy from Beardsley’s cancelled cover and plates given him by Henry Harland and from the poem and cancelled list of contents given him by Watson. Beneath this note is another of the same date signed by Harland, The Yellow Book’s literary editor, which reads, “This is, so far as I know, the only copy of this suppressed Yellow Book in existence.” A letter from Watson to Gosse, accompanying the gift of his poem and suggesting a back-scratching arrangement between the two writers, is tipped in. Thus the dummy copy not only is a minor landmark in English literary history but also provides further evidence of Gosse’s foresight and resourcefulness as a collector.

Completing this little collection is a series of eleven cablegrams to or from John Lane, the publisher of The Yellow Book, who was absent in America throughout the crisis. The telegrams chiefly concern the trial of Wilde and the suppression of the Beardsley drawings. If there was any doubt of the leading role of Watson in the demand for Beardsley’s dismissal, it is removed by these telegrams, notably one dated April 8, 1895:

Withdraw all Beardsleya designs or I withdraw all my books

Watson

William Watson, it is generally forgotten, was a highly respected poet who some thought would be named Laureate; this ultimatum to his publisher was not to be ignored. Of course, the ultimate responsibility for Beardsley’s dismissal was Lane’s, and he has been repeatedly censured for his decision. The telegrams make it clear that he was inadequately informed of the facts and that he acted on the advice of a nervous subordinate and under pressure from several of his leading authors with a misdirected sense of righteousness. The Library’s acquisition documents significantly this controversy and highlights an important moment in the rivalry between the so-called decadence and counter-decadence of the nineties.—J. BENJAMIN TOWNSEND '40
GIFTS

Included in a recent gift from Gordon A. Block, Jr. '36 were a large collection of first editions of A. A. Milne; several first editions of James Hilton; a number of editions of Gray's Elegy; William Langland's The vision of Pierce Plowman, London, 1561; and a letter from Aaron Burr to G. W. Lathrop, January 27, 1814. A group of important Stevenson items presented by Henry E. Gerstley '20 is described elsewhere in this issue, in "New & Notable." Many additions to the Hamilton Collection came from Sinclair Hamilton '06. Richard K. Paynter, Jr. '25 gave a collection of postage stamps, consisting mainly of United States, British, and British colonial stamps.

Gifts were received also from the following Friends: Elmer Adler, Hubertis M. Cummings '07, Roswell F. Easton '98, Thomas H. English '18, Alfred C. Howell, Mrs. John L. Kuser, Jr., David H. McAlpin '20, Gilbert S. McClintock '08, Mrs. Charles F. W. McClure, Harold R. Medina '09, Miss Maria R. Miller, Sterling Morton '06, J. Harlin O'Connell '14, Charles G. Osgood, Laurence G. Payson '16, Charles S. Preshore '06, Edward Steese '24, W. Frederick Stohlman '09, Willard Thorp, Mrs. Barnett Warner, and Louis C. West.

THE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Council on October 26, 1954, Robert H. Taylor '30 was elected Chairman of the Council of the Friends of the Princeton Library, succeeding Sinclair Hamilton '06, who had served for three years as Chairman, and Edward Naumburg, Jr. '24 was elected a Vice-Chairman.

CONTRIBUTIONS

A total of $1,080.00 has been received from Friends. From John G. Buchanan '09 came a further addition to the fund set aside for the purchase of titles on the Princeton list of the Hundred Great English Books still to be secured for the Library. The contribution from William S. Dix was for a purchase to be made as a memorial to the late Professor Jeter A. Isely. Sinclair Hamilton '06 enlarged the special fund created to maintain the Hamilton Collection. Robert H. Taylor '30 enabled the Library to acquire for the Parrish Collection the dedication copy of Dinah Maria Mulock Craik's The Head of the Family, London, 1854, containing a presentation inscription from the author to Elizabeth Barrett Browning, to whom the book is dedicated. The Freneau Fund, which is used for the purchase of American literature, was increased by a contribution from Willard Thorp.
FRIENDS OF THE PRINCETON LIBRARY

The Friends of the Princeton Library, founded in 1912, is an association of bibliophiles and scholars interested in book collecting and the graphic arts and in increasing and making better known the resources of the Princeton University Library. It has secured gifts and legacies and has provided funds for the purchase of rare books, manuscripts, and other material which would not otherwise have been acquired by the Library.

Membership is open to anyone subscribing annually for $50 or more. Checks payable to Princeton University should be addressed to the Treasurer. Members receive The Princeton University Library Chronicle and publications issued by the Friends, and are invited to participate in meetings and to attend special lectures and exhibits.

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