A Collector Looks at the Nineties

BY J. HARLIN O'CONNELL '14

The Commemoration exhibition in the Treasure Room this June has been selected from the shelves of a remarkable library assembled by J. Harlin O'Connell '14. Concentrating on only one aspect of his collecting interests, Mr. O'Connell selected, arranged and described some of the high spots in his 1890s collection. In the following essay, the first in a series to be entitled, "What Do the Princeton Friends Collect?" he gives us a few suggestions as to the pleasures and rewards he has found in this particular field.

If anyone has been bitten seriously by the collecting-bug and is anxious to find a field which will furnish never-ending variety and complexity, I can recommend most heartily the books, magazines, arts, and personalities of the 1890s. Beginning superficially with the physical appearances of publications in this period, one may recognize the wide range from neopagan pleasure in sensual delights and self-conscious aestheticism through the myriad combinations to the other extreme of austere spirituality and religious asceticism. Merely the bindings of the books and magazines, with their emphasis on strong colors, the purples and yellows, greens and blues—and with their intricate ornamentation of silks, vellums, tooled leathers, blind and colored stampings—give one the character of the period. The illustrations, particularly the black and white designs by Aubrey Beardsley, Charles Ricketts and Burne-Jones, suggest an era of fantastic vitality and sophisticated decadence.

These revelations are vivid expressions of personalities so varied, so complex and so intimately self-assertive as to make
the graphic arts and the literature of the period consistently autobiographical. It is this deeper interest in the personalities of individual authors and artists which has held my attention and has increased the pleasures of the hunt and chase in collecting the work of those artists and authors who lived in the 1890s. I should like to give the reader a few sketches which may show how my own collecting has added fresh insight to the lives and characters of those men who are represented in my collection.

If one figure may be taken as the symbol of the period, that figure is Aubrey Beardsley, the talented consumptive with "a face like a silver hatchet" and "grass-green hair," to use Wilde's description. The 1890s have often been referred to as the "Beardsley Period"; certainly the title is merited for he was unquestionably the leader in the artistic renaissance of those years. Born in 1872, he was educated at the Brighton Grammar School—and there gave early evidence of his talent. One of my most highly prized pieces of Beardsleyana is his school book, The Press Writings of Swift, which contains many drawings in ink made by Beardsley at about the age of fifteen years, while still at the Brighton Grammar School. The sketches of figures and landscapes already reveal the familiar delicacy of line and microscopic detail. It seems quite appropriate that this cornerstone of my Beardsley collection should thus combine the works of two English satirists—so different and yet so original.

Another piece in my Beardsley collection which gets close to the beginning of beginnings is a printed program of the annual entertainment at the Brighton Grammar School, in 1888. This program contains a number of illustrations by Beardsley, referred to in the explanatory note as follows, "The illustrations are Original Etchings by A. V. Beardsley, A Present Boy." I have laid into this a letter from A. W. King to John Lane, which completes the picture and reads in part as follows, "When I say... that Beardsley took a prominent part in 'the great Dome Entertainments of 1886 and 1887' I ought also to have said '1888'. . . . The program was illustrated by Beardsley. B. left school at Xmas 1888. . . ."

Although the spread of Beardsley's fame is generally associated with The Yellow Book, beginning in 1894, he had won recognition shortly after he went to London to work in an insurance office. Having taken his portfolio of drawings around to the young publisher, John M. Dent, he was commissioned to make pen drawings for a de luxe edition of Malory's Morte d'Arthur, intended by Dent to rival the work of William Morris' Kelmscott Press. When the edition was published in two sumptuous quarto volumes in 1893, Beardsley had "arrived." Shortly after, in a letter to a friend, he wrote, "The work I have already done for Dent has simply made my name. Subscribers crowd from all parts. William Morris has sworn a terrible oath against me for daring to bring out a book in his manner. The truth is that, while his work is mere imitation of old stuff, mine is fresh and original. Anyhow, all the good critics are on my side." To supplement my copy of the Morte d'Arthur, I have two of the original pen drawings made by Beardsley for this edition, together with the later portfolio of reproductions of eleven designs omitted from the first edition.

Beardsley's relations with John Lane, the American Henry Harland, and others, in the publication of the illustrated quarterly The Yellow Book is too familiar to need retelling in detail here. Lane had recently established himself in the little Bodley Head bookshop in Vigo Street (badly damaged recently by German bombs), and soon after the appearance of Beardsley's drawings for Dent, Lane commissioned Beardsley to illustrate the first English edition of Wilde's Salome. Out of this new publisher-relationship grew the suggestion, from Beardsley and Harland, that Lane create an up-to-date review which would give expression to all that was best not only among the established writers but also among the younger men. More in jest than in earnest, Lane agreed to publish a quarterly provided that Beardsley and Harland would be the editors. And one morning in April, 1894 pedestrians in Vigo Street were startled to see the window of the Bodley Head filled with nothing but Yellow Books, "creating such a mighty glow of yellow... that one might have been forgiven for imagining for a moment that some awful portent had happened, and that the sun had risen in the West." From its Beardsley-decorated cover to the end it was something new and daring, and the conservatıves were not slow to open their grumbling attack. The editors were delighted to have caused a stir, and, as a con-
temporary phrased it, “two or three days after the publication of the first number they awoke with delight to find themselves infamous.” The prudent John Lane was a bit bewildered: a friendly game of hide-and-seek developed between Beardsley and Lane, for the artist loved to bring in new drawings which were witty and satiric—and naughty.

The mounting storm of criticism broke on poor John Lane when Oscar Wilde was arrested in 1896 (after he had failed in his libel action against the Marquis of Queensberry), and the newspapers incorrectly reported that Wilde had been carrying a copy of The Yellow Book under his arm at the moment of his arrest! Although the quarterly survived for two more years, it never recovered. Under the protests of many conservative authors on his publishing list, John Lane submitted to the suppression of Beardsley’s drawings for Volume V and thus ended Beardsley’s connection with The Yellow Book. My collection contains not only the complete run of thirteen numbers but also a copy of the original prospectus containing Beardsley’s suppressed design for the cover of Volume I. From time to time I have added to these representative autograph letters by authors such as William Watson, Arthur Waugh, Austin Dobson, Ernest Dowson and others who contributed to The Yellow Book.

Alongside The Yellow Book, in any such collection, must stand the eight numbers of its competitor, The Savoy, with its pink covers and its designs and title-pages by Beardsley. That The Savoy should have attracted such authors as Shaw, Beerbohm, Dowson, Yeats, More, and Johnson is enough to show why it burned so brightly—but alas, briefly—in 1896. It began as a quarterly and after two issues was changed to a monthly. I have in my collection an amusing letter written by Dowson after he had learned of the change:

“IT is a great & admirable institution the ‘Savoy,’ & held in high esteem here as elsewhere. I hope it will succeed as well in its monthly aspect as I presume it has as a quarterly. May the hair of John Lane grow green with envy!”

Those days of good living, congeniality, and witty conversations brought groups together without any crusading purpose except self-expression—art for art’s sake. Poets such as Richard Le Gallienne, Lionel Johnson, Ernest Dowson, William Butler Yeats and Arthur Symons began to congregate at odd times around tables at Doctor Johnson’s favorite tavern, the Cheshire Cheese in Fleet Street. And when they called themselves members of the Rhymers’ Club they meant to signify nothing more than mutuality and fellowship. But the young man from Devon, John Lane, who had tired of being a clerk in the Railway Clearing House, began to talk of plans for publication. Many of these youthful poets had not yet published any books and Lane thought they might do so successfully. In 1892 he started them off with The Book of the Rhymers’ Club—and somehow (nobody could say just how) “the Bodley Head Poets” began to find recognition and a reading public. Here were different approaches to poetry although the spirit of the times pervaded all. Dowson, frail, delicate, and sensitive in his every manner, had already charmed the Rhymers one evening at The Cheshire Cheese by reciting his new lines beginning,

Last night, ah yesternight, betwixt her lips and mine
There fell thy shadow, Cymara! thy breath was shed
Upon my soul between the kisses and the wine. . . .

And another member, Victor Flarr, had summed up the mood in a whimsical “Epitaphium” which concluded,

Whisper not ‘There is a reason
Why we bring her no white blossom,’
Since the sweetest bloom’s in season
Stray it on her sleeping bosom:
Oh, for it would be a pity
To o’erpraise her or to flout her;
She was wild, and sweet, and witty—
Let’s not say dull things about her.

In later years, many of these poets remembered John Lane with affection for his imagination and for his knack of bringing out distinguished books of poetry in attractive formats with beautiful designs by artists as competent as Charles Ricketts and Laurence Housman. I have a copy of an early book by Le Gallienne, inscribed to John Lane with seven stanzas of rhyme celebrating their friendship and recalling “the whiskey that began it all.” Another favorite of mine is one of the earliest books of poetry issued by John Lane: John Gray’s Silverpoints, 1893—one of twenty-five copies printed on special paper and
bound in vellum. Rickett's initials and his cover design for this little book were extremely happy. With my copy I also proudly keep the complete holograph manuscript of this celebrated book of poems. The manuscript (at one time owned by Pierre Loti, close friend of many literary celebrities in the 1890s) contains thirty poems, two of which were not used in the book as published. The author has added a note to one of these unpublished poems: "Suppressed from the volume on the ground of indecency." But the note reminds us merely that John Gray became a Catholic priest; the suppressed material could hardly be called indecent.

Of all these poets, Dowson is the one whose name has stood most appropriately as a symbol of the 1890s, and I must confess that my sales resistance has been extremely weak whenever I have discovered his books, letters or manuscripts. Practically an invalid all his life, Dowson lived recklessly and often miserably. He was a student at Queen's College, Oxford, but left without obtaining a degree. Trying a business career in London without success he soon devoted himself entirely to poetry. For a time he mingled regularly with the members of the Rhymers' Club. Quite appropriately, his "Cynara" first appeared in that erotic and beautiful periodical, *The Century Guild Hobby Horse*, in 1891. I have a few of his letters written to his friend Victor Plant, already mentioned. In one he quite ironicaly gives a harsh description of his first meeting with Robert Sherard, the friend who was with him at Dowson's bitter death at the age of thirty-three, after years of hardship, excess, and disease. He writes, "I met Sherard last night for the first time in the Temple and we sat up for long talking. He came over with Zola and is writing a biography of him. He is charming but the most morose & spinefull person I have yet encountered. His conversation is undeluted vitriol." In another letter Dowson mentions Beardsley and his first experience with hashish: "Have you seen Beardsley? . . . he was very amusing on my last Sunday in Paris. We went to see Lautrec, & Beardsley took some hashish for the first time. There was no result for many hours: then suddenly, while we were dining with Smithers at Margary's the haschish began to work very powerfully. Luckily we were in a cabinet or I think we should have been turned out—for Beardsley's laughter was so tumultuous that it infected the rest of us who had not taken hascshish & we all behaved like imbeciles." Dowson's underscoring of the word "not" is rather amusing, for he had had some experience with the drug while a student at Oxford.

Hashish and absinthe were favorites during the 1890s. Le Gallienne tells of visiting Lionel Johnson in his room one memorable night when Johnson remarked, "I hope you drink absinthe, Le Gallienne, for I have nothing else to offer you." Recalling the incident later, Le Gallienne wrote, "To me it had the sound of helleborus or mandragora . . . in the '90s it was spoken of with a self-conscious sense of one's being desperately wicked, suggesting diabolism and nameless iniquity.

But back to Dowson. His only passion was final and devastating. He fell in love with a waitress in Soho named Adelaide and courted her with much too much delicacy. One of the most interesting manuscripts in my collection is a letter to Dowson, on the back of which is the original draft of his "Val- ediction" to Adelaide. The manuscript is a symbol and epitome of much in Dowson's life and character. The letter is from a firm of what the English call "share-pushers"—we call them stockbrokers. Dowson is reminded, in the letter, that he had an opportunity to join the Stanley syndicate at one pound a share, but that the price is now three pounds. Fortunately a new syndicate is to be organized and Dowson is advised "to secure some of the shares at one pound each and to lose no time about it as the price will rise rapidly." (These words remind us of the good old days before 1929.) Dowson was in the habit of pretending, to those who did not know him well, that he was a man of some importance in the business world. He kept such letters in his pocket and on occasion would casually produce them in order to impress his acquaintances. It may be imagined that he had this particular letter in his pocket one night when he went to the Soho restaurant where he could be near his beloved waitress, Adelaide. Perhaps while sitting at the table he became worried about his financial condition—a chronic problem—for there are some memoranda at the top of the sheet: expenses for the day. "Book 1.0, Dinner 3.0, Drink 0.6" and other items which totaled "7.0." We may imagine him sitting there and worrying—over his lack of money, over his poor health, over unrequited love—as he
watched the adored Adelaide move unconcernedly from table to table. And we may also imagine how, out of a full heart, he started writing the "Valediction" which begins,

If we must part,
Then let it be like this:—
Not heart on heart
Nor with the useless anguish of a kiss—
But touch mine hand and say,
"Tomorrow or some other day,
If we must part."

With all his talk about parting he was not prepared for the actual dénouement, which came when Adelaide eloped with a waiter. From that time, Dowson's despondency led him to increased dissipation until he literally drank himself to death.

Dowson's friendships are epitomized for me by two volumes in my collection: Lionel Johnson's own copies, with his autographs, of The Book of the Rhymers' Club, 1892, and the Second Book of the Rhymers' Club, 1894. In the second volume is a faded flower pressed out between the pages of Dowson's poem "Extreme Unction." And a note in the handwriting of the poetess Louise Imogen Guiney (to whom these volumes were presented by Clement Shorter after Johnson's death) explains that the flower was placed in the book by Johnson after he had learned of Dowson's death on February 23, 1900. This is undoubtedly correct for we do know that "Extreme Unction" was selected by Lionel Johnson for publication in this volume in place of another poem submitted by Dowson; that Johnson particularly admired it; and that it was subsequently republished in Verses, 1896, with a special dedication to Lionel Johnson. Johnson was a devout convert to Catholicism and Dowson was also a convert, although considerably less devout. Many other prominent figures in the 1890s—including Francis Thompson, Oscar Wilde, John Gray, and Aubrey Beardsley—after leading hectic lives were converted to Catholicism or again embraced that faith before death.

Equally as tragic as Dowson's life was that of Francis Thompson, poet and mystic, "master of the lordly line, the daring image, and the lyric's lilt." While at Ushaw College, near Durham, Thompson showed an insatiable love for books and, though he did not take part in any of the college games, acquired a passion for cricket. After he left Ushaw he studied medicine, but only because his father insisted. For eight unsuccessful years Thompson continued at Owens College, Manchester, hating his regular studies, spending much time in the libraries or at Old Trafford, the famous cricket ground. His father continually reproached him for his indifference to the profession selected for him; finally there was a painful scene and Francis abruptly left his home. He walked to London where, like DeQuincey, he "knew Oxford Street for a stony-hearted stepmother." For a time he worked as an assistant in a bookshop near Leicester Square, later as a "collector" for a bookseller, hauling heavy sacks through the streets. But there were times when no employment of any kind could be found, and the homeless night followed the hungry day. Never physically strong, he had suffered a nervous breakdown before leaving Manchester; now he was in no condition to face destitution stoically and brooded on self-destruction. He lived from day to day without friends in London and was glad to earn a trifle by any odd job such as selling matches. Often his bed was a bench on the Embankment. Finally, when more nearly dead than alive, he was literally taken out of the gutter by a pitying girl of the streets and brought to her room. For weeks she nursed him back to health and encouraged him. During those days of recuperation he sent his poems, written on salvaged scraps of soiled paper, to impatient editors. One of these hopelessly unpresentable manuscripts came to the desk of Wilfred Meynell, editor of Merry England, who saw the genius and tragedy in the offering, and eventually traced the vagrant poet. When Thompson was invited to live for a time in Meynell's home he hesitated, for he had grown to love the nameless girl who had saved him. With renunciation as generous as her first charity she left without a word—and for months after Thompson had gone to live with Meynell he walked the familiar streets of London searching for her face in the crowds. He never saw her again. His first volume, Poems, published by John Lane in 1893, contained his most celebrated poem, "The Hound of Heaven," and abundant praise was showered on him by the critics. One reviewer wrote, "... His first volume is no mere promise—it is itself among the great achievements of
English poetry; it has reached the peak of Parnassus at a bound.”

I cannot help but take pleasure in my own copy of Francis Thompson’s Poems, 1893. John Lane almost outdid himself in producing a beautiful volume with an appropriately symbolic frontispiece, titlepage and cover design by Laurence Houseman. On the flyleaf is an inscription by John Lane: “Of this edition only 12 copies were printed of which this is No. III.” There was also a trade edition. This particular copy has an added association, for it once belonged to the painter John S. Sargent and bears his nameplate.

Any view of the 1890s would be incomplete unless it contained specific reference to the brilliant Oscar Wilde, whose persecution and imprisonment offer sufficient evidence that Victorian prudery had not been destroyed by fin de siècle prurience. He is represented in my collection by more than thirty first editions or first appearances, beginning with selected numbers of Kottabos, a magazine published at Trinity College, Dublin. Wilde was at Trinity College from October 1871 to July 1874 and then went to Magdalen College, Oxford. While at Oxford he contributed five poems to the Trinity publication, and their appearances during 1876-7 are some of Wilde’s earliest published work. I also have some numbers of an Oxford undergraduate publication, Waifs and Strays, 1879-80, containing poems by Wilde.

Perhaps more interesting to the casual reader are certain letters and manuscripts relating to or by Wilde which are in my collection. One of the earliest letters, written immediately after the accidental death of Lord Alfred Douglas’ brother in 1894, accentuates the friendship between Wilde and Lord Alfred Douglas which was to result in calamity for them both. Another extremely revealing manuscript, thirty-eight pages in length, is an article entirely in Douglas’ hand, intended for publication in the Mercure de France, but never published. It was written shortly after Wilde’s second trial, and includes three letters from Wilde to Douglas while the former was on trial. In the article Douglas discusses the Wilde trial, his father the Marquis of Queensberry, the character and nature of his friendship with Wilde, in language which is startling to say the least. Wilde ends one of the quoted letters written to Douglas from Holloway Prison on “the night before the last day of his first trial” as follows: “Dearest child, sweetest of all young men, most loved and most lovable. Oh! Wait for me! I am now as ever, since the day we met, yours devotedly and with an immortal love. Oscar.” After reading this manuscript it is easy to understand why it was never published.

Another letter, from Wilde to More Adey, reveals another aspect of Wilde’s trouble. It was written from Naples in 1898. Wilde and his wife had made an agreement whereby he was to receive an allowance so long as he did not associate with any “disreputable person.” Lord Alfred Douglas is not mentioned by name in the agreement; but when Douglas and Wilde joined by name in the agreement, his wife disassociated in Naples in the winter of 1898. Wilde’s wife disassociated and continued the allowance. In this letter to his friend, Wilde protests against his wife’s action: “I was hurt at your saying to me that you felt bound to admit that Mrs. Wilde was acting strictly within her legal rights according to the agreement. . . . at present my own friends have given away my position— I am fighting without support. . . . At present I don’t know what to do—Bosie (Douglas’ nick-name) will probably go to Paris—I see nothing to do but to stay on here—and try to get to literary work. Of course I am depressed by the difficulty of reaching an audience. . . . the adventures of my American poems have been a terrible blow to my ambition, my vanity, and my hopes. Perhaps Adrian Hope may recommend my wife to continue the allowance on condition of my not ever again living in the same house as Bosie—and we are both ready to accept the inevitable, forced now on him as well as on me. We have no option.”

These letters are written out of despair and heartickness. Le Gallienne was inclined to look back on Wilde’s stormy career with too much detachment when he wrote, “I sometimes wonder whether the tragedy did not mean more to Wilde’s friends than it meant to himself. Indeed, inordinately fond of the limelight as he was, so conscious throughout his career of his own drama, one cannot help the suspicion that he rather enjoyed his own tragedy. . . . For he had been condemned at the bar of a Philistine public opinion whose jurisdiction he regally denied. Despising the public, while at the same time its attention was the breath of his nostrils, it was
hardly be expected that he should take its condemnation seriously.” I cannot agree with such a facile interpretation. With Wilde’s own personal letters here before me, I am able to read them only with a consciousness of the cumulative and inescapable tragedy in the life of that strange and fascinating character.

Lest this essay by labeled, “Garrulities of a Collector,” I must bring it to a close. Perhaps I could mention just a few other passages which might be explored if there were time. As I look about at my shelves, I see that I have not mentioned the important contributions to fine printing made by the Kelmscott, Daniel, Ballantine and Vale presses during the 1890s. And I have not done full justice to the illustrators of the period, from Burne-Jones, Rackham, Beardsley, and Hamer to the caricaturists such as Beerbohm. Nor have I mentioned any of George Moore’s work, although there are over twenty of his first editions on my shelves, many with presentation inscriptions to figures prominent in the 1890s. In fact, I have slighted many of the most interesting “association copies.”

Again, I should like to have discussed some of my favorite books which do not fall definitely into the tone and temper of the period, but which are of the period—books as diverse as Kenneth Grahame’s *Dream Days*, Kipling’s *Jungle Books*, Du Maurier’s *Peter Ibbetson*, Conan Doyle’s *Sherlock Holmes*, and Jerome’s *Three Men in a Boat*. But I discover from my loose-leaf catalogue of this collection—and to other collectors I commend the pleasures of compiling an informative and descriptive catalogue of their favorite collection—that I have over sixty authors represented by separate publications in my 1890s collection. Obviously someone must be neglected in such a restricted essay.

I hope I may have convinced the reader that there was no single aspect or direction dominating the 1890s. The decade was as full of birth as of death. Individualism shot to new heights during those celebrated years, much as a gigantic skyrocket bursts to illuminate the sky with a multiplicity of colorful flashes. The era is gone, the show is over, and almost all of these men are now dead. But the variety and strange wonder may still be found today, by the discerning, as it is reflected imperishably in the books, letters and drawings which remain as our heritage.

The Princeton Archives of American Letters

*A PROGRAM TO MEET AN OBLIGATION TO FUTURE HISTORIANS*

BY JULIAN P. BOYD

If there had existed a century ago some systematic program for collecting and preserving the diaries, manuscripts, and correspondence files of American authors, present-day historians of American literature would find at their disposal immensely rich collections of source material. The original manuscripts of *Moby Dick* or *Tannhäuser*, if now available, would be important documents for critical literary studies. Correspondence files, diaries, invoices, waste-basket scraps of manuscripts and other ephemera would be far more important in revealing what authors ate, wore, felt, and attempted as they struggled under the compelling demands of the creative urge. Nor would such a systematic program have fulfilled its function by confining itself to the Poes, the Melvilles, the Emersons, and the Longfellows: it would have met its obligation in full only if it had been concerned with a broad and inclusive definition of literature, with those who created badly as well as with those who created well. Its inclusiveness would have told us much more than we now know about the Laughton Osbornes, the Gullan C. Verplancks, the George Lippards, the Jacob Hestons and the other writers whose names now are merely names.

But no such program existed a century ago. “Time and accident,” as Thomas Jefferson wrote in 1791, “are committing accident,” as Thomas Jefferson wrote in 1791, “are committing...” (133)
prevalent notion that literary history could be written—if indeed it needed to be written at all—from the printed works of its dominant figures. Here and there, to be sure, a lone voice cried in the wilderness and occasionally saved some precious documents.

The Princeton University Library, profiting from the omissions and neglects of the past, has firmly resolved to meet its obligation to future historians by doing all in its power to collect now the records that serve to illuminate and document the contemporary American scene. We have proceeded upon the broad assumptions that librarians have concentrated their attention chiefly upon the printed word to the neglect of the much more voluminous and often equally important manuscript records in other forms; that contemporary or nearly contemporary ephemera and documents ought to be gathered now and preserved for future use; that a university library, serving graduate students and faculties constantly engaged in research, ought to be able to command an immense reservoir of original sources for such research; and that some systematic effort ought to be made to accomplish this object. In consequence, we have projected The Princeton Archives of American Civilization, the purpose of which is the collection and preservation of all forms of records relating to all important aspects of American civilization. This will include the enormous documentation of radio, industry, dramatic arts, public affairs, history, literature, etc. We have taken the last-named subdivision as our first field of activity and under it we have organized our effort in a way that we hope may be followed to advantage in other areas of knowledge, that is, by organizing a committee of those whose careers are identified with literature, either as authors or as scholars or as publishers.

This committee is concerned with the task of building up The Archives of American Letters. Its chairman is Carl Van Doren, a distinguished teacher, critic, and historian of literature, and its members include many prominent American writers, some of whom are Princeton alumni.*

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* Thọse whose names are italicized are graduates of Princeton.

Namara, H. L. McNeney, Maxwell Perkins, Bliss Perry, Kenneth Roberts, Muriel Rukeyser, Booth Tarkington, Allen Tate, Ridgely Torrence, Mark Van Doren, and Carl Van Vechten. The committee have enthusiastically and unanimously agreed that the need for an aggressive and systematic effort to preserve contemporary letters and manuscripts is perhaps greater today than ever before. The character of modern communication by telegraph, telephone, and radio has not only changed the nature of documentation in some degree but has made more imperative the need for preserving the valuable records of the records that should be preserved. Space or rather lack of space is another enemy of history, especially in respect of publishers' massive records. House-cleaning for sorely needed space is a recurrent phenomenon in publishing firms, and it is a firm conviction of the committee that libraries and scholars rather than pulp mills ought to be the beneficiaries of this enforced house-cleaning.

We do not minimize the problem of bulk and the problem of storage. Much of this material can and should be destroyed, with little or no loss to scholarship or history. But we believe that the error in this direction should be on the side of liberality: in general, the problem of reduction of the mass should be left to the future when the passage of time will furnish a more correct perspective for evaluating certain types of records. The important thing is that there should be no meager selection such as to violate the integrity of the whole. Plans are under consideration for making available large areas of space for the literary archives, and the microfilm camera can be counted upon to play its part in the problem of space-saving.

What we in the Princeton University Library like to read now is such a statement as Rupert Hughes made in a recent letter: "It is only my doubt as to the infinite capacity of your library for taking painful things that keeps me from shipping you a few boatloads [of manuscripts and letters]." Our reply to Mr. Hughes' generous support of our program, and to others who have confidence in our work, is this: "Dispel your doubts, Mr. Hughes, and dispatch the boats—we will somehow solve the problem of space. And we will send the boats back with our appreciation and with the assured gratitude of future scholars."
Already the Committee's enthusiasm for the program has produced gratifying results. Mr. Booth Tarkington has contributed the manuscript of his play *Poldek*—two copies with variant endings. We have received the manuscripts or typescripts (together with what publishers so charmingly describe as the "dead master") of Struthers Burt's *Powder River*; Allen Tate's *The Fathers*; Hillel Bernstein's "A Visit to Berchtesgaden" (long version); John Peale Bishop's "The Hours," an elegy on Scott Fitzgerald recently published in the *New Republic*; David Loth's *Woodrow Wilson*; Carleton Beals' *The Great Circle*; F. Van Wyck Mason's *Stars on the Sea*; the manuscript and related documents of Carl Van Doren's *Sinclair Lewis*; Meade Minnigerode's *The Terror of Peru*; and J. B. Rhine's *New Frontiers of the Mind*. Mr. Ridgely Torrence has been an exceedingly helpful member of the committee. From him we have received 253 typescripts of letters written by Edwin Arlington Robinson to Lewis Isaacs, Daniel Gregory Mason and Mrs. Daniel Gregory Mason, Miss Edith Monahan and many others. Through Mr. Torrence's good offices Mr. and Mrs. Mason have presented 51 original letters and two post cards written by William Vaughn Moody to Mr. Mason, 14 original letters written by Moody to Mrs. Mason, and 3 manuscript poems by Moody, one of them a long version. These represent only the documents actually received; a much larger total may be expected shortly under generous assurances from members of the committee and others who have given us. This beginning is encouraging not merely for its accomplishments thus far, but especially for the promise that it holds forth, a promise that the present trickle will become a broad and powerful stream, watering and enriching the history that is yet to be written. Authors and publishers have been both generous and enthusiastic. They have agreed that the plan is worth while; they have also helped us to face some of the complex problems evoked by such a program. We do not minimize the obstacles: a perfect solution of the problems of manuscript may not be possible, but we are firmly convinced that a systematic approach will accomplish more than the old method of leaving our literary records to the mercy of time and accident.

Confessions of a Custodian

OR

AN ORIGINAL RECIPE

FOR A LARGE THEATRE COLLECTION

BY MARGARET L. MCANNY

Bold forecasters who have recently threaded the intricacies of the Library far enough to arrive at the Theatre Collection will remember that it has consisted into a newly constructed cage; that the cage seems to be filling so fast that more space may be needed at any time to care for latest accessions. Much of the credit for this steady increase goes to the custodian of that collection, Mrs. McNaney, who broods over the amorphous whole and brings order out of chaos. In this essay she permits us to understand a facet of her problem.

WHEN I happen to inform some new acquaintance that I am Custodian of the William Seymour Theatre Collection, do I get in response a gushing, "How fascinating!" Or even an awed, "Oh?" Not at all. First I get a baffled silence, and then, "But what does a theatre collection collect?" I used to overwhelm my new acquaintance with an unexpected barrage delivered in such a way as to catch him in a cross-fire of hopelessly unrelated details. It usually went something like this:

"Well, our collection has such varied items as the dimensions of an elephant; the embroidered bag carried by the famous tragedienne Jean Davenport, in the 1850s, while playing a part as Queen Elizabeth; an account of Nijinsky's reactions while enjoying his first view of a football game; an extraordinarily complete *History of Knighthood*, with illustrations; a circular issued by the Buckingham Palace Hotel, London, in 1904, telling us that while hot or cold bath in the bath room is one shilling, a hip bath in a bed room is six shillings and that there is a hydraulic lift to every floor; a letter from an alleged murderer; a bibliography of *Short Health Plays for Children*; a copy of the *Premiere Speaker*, containing hundreds of "readings," ranging from an address to the Veterans by General Sherman (that could be used verbatim as publicity for "Defend America by Aiding the Allies") to a comic anecdote that must have rolled them in the aisles in 1882 but would have to be reborn to amuse an audience in 1941; a play entitled *T-T-M-E-KU-N-
DAN, translated from the Tibetan text, and another play entitled MIKeMIb (which starts, "Incline; Clinic, Melody, hurry, spoon, dumb, cake"), which has not (as yet) been translated from the peculiar Esperanto of Gertrude Stein; a picture of Mary Pickford dripping with long curls as she plays with her pet bird in 1919; a booklet made up of six "smash pages of plantable stories and art" to help managers of movie houses plant the idea that Claudette Colbert, in "Aris My Love," has something definitely more exciting to play with than a pet bird; some intimate information on "the finest and most elaborate sets of Professional Bank and Burglar Tools . . ." (including a set of brasses and bits, "the most complete ever captured in this country, being the same used on one of Herrings's Champion Safes, without success, for thirty hours"); the receipt signed by the celebrated Opera singer Madame Malibran for 1075 francs paid her for her performance at the Theatre Royal Italien on March 5, 1831; a picture of the Minnesota Woolly Baby, from feet to neck a normal baby in a white, frilly dress, but its poor baby face, forehead, and cheeks covered with long shaggy hair; three portfolios of designs bursting with such nice items as a design by Antonio Galli-Bibiena, 1700-1774, for a "Royal Canopy" guaranteed to produce a fascinating fit in any royalty canopied by it; a book on make-up which tells helpfully that "the cheek can be made swollen or 'mumpy' by inserting wads of cotton into the mouth next to the cheek"; a different kind of book with such alluring chapter heads as, The Prizes of Hippopotami, An Actress Drinks a Bottle of Ink by Mistake, History of the Nude Woman Question in America, A Dissertation on the Banjo; an original letter from the adoring friend of the great actor Edwin Forrest, telling what clothes he had put on Forrest before he was laid in his coffin; or, for heterogeneity, a revealing picture of "Front and side views of olivette, showing mogul clean sockets and 1000-watt PS-52 incandescent lamp, various ventilation openings with spreaders and baffles and inside corner cleats and outer side cleats for rigidity."

At some time before this point, rigidity has begun to be noticeable in the face of my new acquaintance. His eyes have that glazed look of one who suspects he is in the presence of a lunatic and wonders how he can get away without bodily harm. So I gave up that approach to the question. Now I have decided on a new method of answering it. I am going to start very gently and patiently, thus:

You know the depression gave a lot of people time to look around in their attics and cellars and libraries; time to realize that America had a "past" that included more than Colonial doorways and Paul Revere silver. This realization, combined with a rising wave of interest in the theatre itself, gave a great stimulus to collecting theatre records. Whereas in 1925 there were only three or four libraries in the whole U.S.A. where theatre records were kept as such, in 1941 practically every big university and museum has some sort of theatre collection.

The more we, the races, delved into the past of the theatre the more we began to realize that here was an important slice of our past. If you look at what a man has paid money to be amused by, you get a valuable clue to his civilization. Viewed in this way, it is difficult to say where a theatre collection can draw its limits. Shall we keep the records of the dignified Booth playing in King Lear, and throw away the records of Leavitt's Gigantean Minstrels who were packing them in at another theatre on the same street? Just because they do not deal with actual plays, shall we throw away the programs of P. T. Barnum's "Greatest Show on Earth," or of Patti's concerts, or Fanny Kemble's readings? Because there are so many facets to this world of entertainment with which we are dealing, it has been difficult to choose a name for any collection of such material. In general the word Theatre has been chosen because it more readily connotes a building with some sort of stage, or platform, where a performance may take place. This word performance is important because it, in turn, connotes some sort of rehearsal. If we focus our interest on those forms of entertainment which men pay to see, why do we not include football games and art exhibitions within our sphere? The answer is that pictures do not perform, for there must be living creatures for a performance; and that football games are not rehearsed. The athletes are trained, yes, but certainly the Yale football captain is not rehearsed with the Princeton captain to bring them both down on exactly one spot of earth, as the trained elephant in the circus is rehearsed to put his foot on that tiny space, his trainer's forehead, at a given moment in a performance.
ance; as a singer is rehearsed to hit high C; or as a dancer is rehearsed to rise upon the big toe of his right foot at a precise moment in his performance.

Focusing our interest on performers, and rehearsed performances, we find that anything that gives us an insight into the lives of performers, or into the mechanics by which their performances were enhanced, becomes pertinent to our collection. The dimensions of an elephant are important to the man who has to lie beneath him—that Knighthood book containing (according to its title page) "The Religious Military Orders which have been instituted in Europe with descriptions of their mantles, caps, collars, stars, ribbons and mottoes" is as helpful to the costumer of Shakespearean plays as that olive-wood and the incandescent lamp to the electrician who must focus your attention on King Richard rather than on one of his walk-on hirelings.

Where would the circus be without its freaks? or the old time minstrel without his banjo? or Mallibran without her salary? How would that rheumatic visiting star get to his hip bath on the third floor of the Buckingham Palace Hotel without that hydraulic lift? John Wilkes Booth may be known to most people for a definitely unrehearsed performance, but he is known to me by his letter written in Cincinnati on February 18th, 1864, to R. M. Field—manager of the Boston Museum Theatre—saying:

Dear Monty, . . . Depend on me for April 25th, I start from here (God willing) on Saturday for New Orleans, where I play a five weeks engagement, have two weeks to get from there to Boston. . . . I have been very sick here, but am all right again, thank God. . . . I am your true friend, J. Wilkes Booth.

Yes, the performers in this world of entertainment are of many kinds, but they all have one thing in common—at least the human performers—that is lack of system! Some are throwers-away (the reason why so much valuable theatre stuff has been burned or just chucked into the gutter), and some, thank God, are hoarders; but all are profoundly unsystematic! A great deal of the material that has come to this collection has come in laundry boxes, shoe boxes, hat boxes—all kinds of boxes—but all similarly filled with a provocative mass of material. I have sorted from a box, consecutively, one minstrel playbill of the 1840's, one handbook of Houdini's tricks, one box of fish hooks (these, at least, I did not claim as pertinent to a theatre collection), twenty issues of The New York Clipper (a theatrical magazine that preceded Variety and Billboard) an early movie "still" of Theda Bara, and a W.P.A. Federal Theatre program.

It is this variety that makes work in a theatre collection fun. After you have watched a movie with Tyrone Power, it is fun to come upon a book, Impressions of America During the Years 1883, 1834, and 1833 by Tyrone Power; yes, I said 1833 for this Tyrone Power was great grandfather to the one we now watch, and an equally famous actor in his time. After seeing Harry Davenport in Foreign Correspondent, it is fun to read The Delsarte Manual of Oratory which has 24 colored plates showing the correct positions of the arms for delineating "Repulsion" or "Indecision." Immediately after these colored plates comes a section "Readings with Lesson Talks" and the first Reading is "The Wreck of an Ocean Steamship written expressly for this volume by Henry Davenport." The Lesson Talk at the end says:

This selection requires intense feeling and animation. You are aboard the ship; you see all that is described: . . . in full tones imply a certain admiration of the great vessel, and of awe inspired by the storm-lashed ocean. . . . With right hand over the eyes [fig. 24 "Discerning"] look away to see the last signal in the crowd on the deck. Speak the word 'boom' with a prolonged sound on a low key, thus suggesting the sound of the fog-horn.—Cry out 'Man overboard!' just as you would if you saw the man swept from the deck. Point to him, and start forward as if about to attempt to save him. Never overdo dramatic action: let there be no straining for effect.

I'm afraid that the scene designer was definitely straining for an effect in the production of The Ship Wreck, or The Female Sailor, produced in Boston in 1811. I quote the exact words of the playbill: "Scene first represents, a Rocky Coast; a Violent Storm and Shipwreck; a Ball of Fire descends and strikes the ship which sinks. The Mariners, etc, are seen floating on the waves. Plunderers, etc, are seen watching on the rocks, etc."

It is pleasant to read the rather contradictory statements concerning the beginnings of drama in America. George O. Willard, in his History of the Providence Stage (1891), says, "The
notice was carried until July 17th, when its place was taken by “The play of the MOUNTAINEERS is in great forwardness and will speedily be produced.” This enticing phrase was carried for three days, and then—grim silence for a week! Had the leading lady refused to act opposite the leading man, the juvenile caught a cold, the scenery ruined? Whatever happened, on the bill for July 27th, we read quite calmly that “The Play of the MOUNTAINEERS is nearly ready for representation, and will be produced in a few days.” Then, “On Saturday next will be produced a New Play in Three Acts, called—(yes, you have guessed it) The MOUNTAINEERS.” This was carried until Friday when appeared “Tomorrow, will be produced a New Play—with New Music, Scenery and Dresses.” I turned the page to Saturday, and oh! Horror! there is the cast of the MOUNTAINEERS all right, but over it in large letters “NEVER PERFORMED.” It was only when I turned to Monday and saw the MOUNTAINEERS calmly announced as “PERFORMED BUT ONCE,” that I realized that “Never performed” must have been good eighteen century idiom for opening night, or “world premiere.” The play wound up the season, happily, with its “TWENTY SIXTH TIME,” on September 14th, and was frequently repeated the following summer season of the Hay-Market.

I have stumbled on some appealing translations, for instance a program of a play called Ching Yung, an Amateur Dramatic Performance, at the Saranrom Gardens, given by the Dvipanya Club. The cast of characters is given in some strange language—the part of Phya Sakrinda Lülaj being played by Phya Rajavallobh, etc. Then comes, “Note: This play is founded on Richard Brinsley Sheridan’s comedy, The Rivals.” A good deal of the dialogue has had to be remodelled; and the entire fourth act had to be invented, so as to provide an ending without the dulling scene which would not have been appropriate in the Siamese version.” I like even better a big play—bill of the Teatro Standish in Florence, Italy, for January, 1842. The bill announces, in Italian and English, that Richard III will be given by that same Jean Davenport whose handkerchief bag we own. The bill announces, as an afterpiece, “The Manager’s Daughter,” and gives us a list of the “Characters

founder of the American Stage was Moody of Drury Lane, a man who in early life had been a barber, but who... subsequently attempted the dramatic profession. He set sail, and reached the island of Jamaica about the year 1745.” Dr. A. S. W. Rosenbach, in his interesting pamphlet, The First Theatrical Company in America (1939), states, “We know from a recently recovered manuscript that in 1799 a number of comedians came to South America, and formed themselves into a stage company.”

I long for a glimpse of that “recently recovered manuscript,” but I console myself by reading the manuscripts of some “prop” letters we have that were used in actual productions in the Boston Museum some seventy years ago. Some of these letters were labeled with the name of the play in which they were to be used, but the one addressed to Anthony Lumpkin, Esquire, saying, “I am now waiting for Miss Neville, with a post chaise and pair, at the bottom of the garden,” needed no more identification, then, than it does now. Nor did the one “Sweet Basanio, my ships have all miscarried, my creditors grow cruel—my bond to the Jew is forfeit,” nor the one “Madame, I have learned of the duel which has taken place between Armand and the Count de Verville—you have kept your oath, and proved how well you love,—believe me, your friend, George Duval.” I like to think that the ghosts of Godsmith and Shakespeare and Dumas fils, were hovering over me when I sorted those letters from the welter in a laundry box. Godsmith and Shakespeare, I think, were pretty sure of themselves, but Dumas let out a sigh of relief when I walked past the regular letter file of Mr. Seymour’s correspondence, and landed safely near the folder marked Camillus.

Having worked in the hurly-burly of both Broadway and amateur productions, I like to imagine the background of feverish activity and frayed nerves that lie hidden behind a series of sentences at the bottom of some playbills of the Theatre Royal, Hay-Market, London. One of the treasures of Mr. Seymour’s collection was an eighteen volume set containing the complete “run” of playbills at the Hay-Market from 1793 to 1811. At the bottom of the bill for July 8, 1793, it was announced that “The play of the MOUNTAINEERS is in preparation, and will be produced as soon as possible.” This
assumed by Miss Davenport, together with an English and Italian explanation of the characters”:

HECTOR EARSPLITTER—un monello americano, (an american fool)

EFFIE HEATHERBLOOM—una persona scozzese (a scotch lass Weth gland Fling)

FERGUS O'BOTHERWELL—un irlandese aspirante alla marina (an Irish fleet aspirant)

PAUL—un menestrello francese (a Irish yorish)

Translations, letters, programs,—anything and everything pertaining to theatre, circus, music, vaudeville, magic, movies—all these give joy to the heart of a custodian; but that which has given this particular custodian the most joy, is the feeling of being associated with something that is growing. In the Alumni Weekly for December 11, 1956, Professor Robert M. Ball, the Curator, gave a tentative list of some of the most important items in the original William Seymour Theatre Collection—all the books, playbooks, promptbooks, programs, letters, clippings, and pictures which Mr. Seymour had gathered during seventy years in the theatre, as distinguished actor, director, and father in law of Fanny Davenport, son-in-law of E. L. Davenport, and father-in-law of Professor R. M. Field (grandson of the Boston Museum R. M. Field, or “Monty”). This collection, which was given to Princeton University in 1936 through the generosity of Mr. Seymour’s five children, and with the aid of Professor Field, contained, according to Mr. Ball’s list, 814 bound volumes. This number has now grown to about two thousand; seven hundred of these donated by Mr. Roger Moore, at the kind suggestion of May Davenport Seymour, Curator of Theatre and Music Collections at the Museum of the City of New York. Many others have come to us through the Berkeley Rulon Miller Memorial Fund, the Friends of the Princeton Library, the Mary E. Fisk memorial, and Mr. Hoyt’s generous allotment to us from the general library funds.

We have acquired the collection of Edward LeRoy Rice (author of Monarchs of Minstrelsy), a collection of about nine thousand movie stills, besides hundreds of items of minstrel, burlesque and vaudeville interest. Also, we now own the valuable collection of books, programs and pictures which belonged to Frederick A. King, long the drama and music critic of The Literary Digest. Mr. Booth Tarkington has generously given us the manuscript of his play, PoldKiten, together with three later versions, including the happy ending written for George Arliss in 1920, and the version called Karabah for the Kannebeinport Playhouse production in 1939.

We have acquired, among many hundred American programs, seven playbills of the Thespian Theatre in Charleston, 1808; and six of the Army Theatre in Corpus Christi, Texas (1846), where the playbills announce, “All enlisted men that think proper to purchase Box Tickets, can do so, and will occupy the Gallery to the right, looking towards the stage.” Among many English programs, we have acquired five volumes of programs for the principal London theatres during the years 1826 to 1830, and such nice single items as a program of Mrs. Siddons’ last appearance on the stage, and the first performance of Patience, and of Lady Windermere’s Fan. Professor and Mrs. Willard Thorp have sent in many gifts of playbills, programs and movie stills. And Genevieve Cobb has given us many programs. Kenneth MacKenna, with the gracious conivance of his mother, Mrs. Leo Mielziner, has generously given us the entire record of his “legitimate theatre” career, from his first appearance in a production of the “Ethical Culture Society,” up through the days when he was playing opposite Helen Hayes in that wonderful revival of What Every Woman Knows, to the days of leading man of Merrily We Roll Along, and Ascent on Youth. He has given us, also, complete sets of stills for the movies which he has directed. Some of the film studios, Paramount, Twentieth Century Fox, and Metro Goldwyn Mayer have sent us interesting contributions of stills, and press books.

A collection which has been a constant source of pride and joy is the McCaddon collection. The sons of Mr. Joseph T. McCaddon have given Princeton a valuable and unique gift, namely all the circus material collected by their father, who was general manager for Barnum and Bailey, and was connected by marriage with Mr. Bailey. His collection, therefore, contains personal things as well as official scrap books, couriers, heralds, posters, etc.
We have subscribed to Film News, among other publications and to Variety, that wonderful weekly organ of the entertainment world that can say in a headline "STRAWHAT OPS SQUAWK ABOUT HIGH STOCK RATES," confident that its readers will clearly understand that the managers of summer theatres object to the high royalties they are being forced to pay for plays this summer—and to that sedate weekly Theatre Critics Review, a new publication that reprints the reviews of the six leading critics on all plays that open in New York. We have had many other gifts besides the ones I have enumerated—gifts of programs, books, pictures, clippings, from alumni and friends—all gratefully remembered.

Yes, the collection is growing, and will, I hope, be even further stimulated next year by the presence on the Princeton faculty of Norris Houghton, director and scene designer, author of that interesting study of the Russian theatre, Moscow Rehearsals, and about-to-be-author of a book written on his experiences while touring the United States for the Rockefeller Foundation this past year, studying the little theatre.

No longer forced to stand alone as a repository of somewhat unorthodox library material, the William Seymour Theatre Collection is soon to have the moral support of a larger program of collecting, "The Princeton Archives of American Civilization." Mr. Boyd is now forming a committee of eminent men and women from the theatre, circus, music, film and radio worlds, to help Princeton collect material for its newly established "Archives of Dramatic Arts"—and I dare you to ask me what they will collect.

Chess Libraries in America

A SKETCH OF THEIR FORMATION AND PROVENANCE

BY ALBRECHT BUSCHEK

The E. B. Cook collection of books and other paraphernalia pertaining to the game and history of chess was presented to the Princeton University Library in 1916, as a bequest of its former owner, Mr. Eugene Beauchains Cook (1871-1916), a member of the class of 1850. A complete list of the books in this collection was published in Princeton University Classed List (1920), Vol. 6, pp. 2983-2988. Dr. Buschke, internationally celebrated authority on and collector of chess books, is the first to have made an extended study of the hundreds of letters in the Cook correspondence preserved during nearly a half-century of vigorous activity in the chess world. From these letters and from his own wide familiarity with other similar correspondences, Dr. Buschke takes us behind the American chess scene during its most flourishing period.

Chess collections have a comparatively long tradition in this country, especially if one considers the fact that the American chess literature began nearly two hundred years ago. In Europe, where chess has been played perhaps since the seventh century, where references to the game may be found in mediaeval romances, and where book collecting has been a favorite hobby since the invention of printing, the gathering of chess collections cannot be traced very much earlier than 1830. In America, chess collections of considerable size existed by 1840. In D. W. Fiske's Book of the First American Chess Congress, 1859, there are records of six or seven collections comparable to the most important European chess collections. And among these is listed the collection of Eugene B. Cook of Hoboken, New Jersey. Curiously enough, Fiske did not mention his own collection which had been described in 1857 as a library "which in point of numbers and value is only excelled by one other in the country." The "one other" was that of Professor George Allen in Philadelphia.

It is rather astonishing to find Mr. Cook's name in such distinguished company only nine years after his graduation from Princeton. Were it not for his already widely established reputation as one of the foremost American composers of chess problems, one would hardly see any justification for listing him among collectors at that time. As late as 1877 Cook wrote
modestly to John G. White of Cleveland, "My little collection should hardly be mentioned with yours and Gilberg's. My list would show but a few over three hundred titles. I began collecting a long time ago but until recently my Chess Library has not grown much."

John G. White, Mr. Cook's correspondent in Cleveland, must have been collecting for some years to have established his celebrated collection, but I have been able to find no records which reveal when or from whom Mr. White gathered his collection. After 1876, however, this particular book collecting game came into prominence in America. And the dominant figures in the field were White of Cleveland, Cook of Hoboken, and Charles A. Gilberg of Brooklyn. This triumvirate became such firm friends who cooperated to share their knowledge and discoveries. Each made the best use of opportunities afforded by the dispersal of several European chess collections during the 1870s and 1880s; but there is little doubt that Gilberg's collection, as well as Cook's, never would have reached any important size had not John G. White helped them very graciously and generously. Certainly without this friendly cooperation the Gilberg collection would not have been preserved entire.

In the letter files of the Cook collection we find many passages which reveal White's generosity. On New Year's Day, 1880, Gilberg wrote to Cook, "I received, last evening, from our Cleveland friend a box containing some old chess books, which he desires us to appropriate as 'a Christmas donation' to our respective libraries. If you can conveniently come over to Brooklyn on Friday or Saturday eve. of this week, we can then proceed to divide the spoils." Thereafter, for the next eleven years, White's Christmas "bales" arrived either at the home of Cook or of Gilberg and were gratefully divided.

The direction of each collector was quite distinct. From the beginning, Cook had been interested in a special kind of chess literature: that relating to chess problems. In this special field he won a lasting reputation, and contributed widely to the publication of original chess literature in America. In fact, as early as 1868 he published with Gilberg and W. A. Henry, American Chess Vignets, a collector's item highly prized today. It is, therefore, important to learn his own ideas concerning a chess library. We are fortunate enough to have his utterances on the subject in letters written to John G. White. One of the earliest, written in February 1877, contains this specific reference: "I am endeavoring to get my library of books relating to chess problems as nearly complete as possible. If there was only sufficient interest in the matter, I should try to write something to illustrate problems chronologically." Regardless of the demand, Cook began to assemble his notes for a study of this subject and continued this aspect of his hobby for more than twenty years. During the extended search for sources which would be of value to him in his projected survey of the historical sequence of chess problems, his collection became particularly rich in chess works which he could afford to buy, copied extracts of old chess manuscripts, and even single periodical articles relating to the subject. The correspondence between White and Cook shows how many suggestions the more wealthy collector in Cleveland received from the more scholarly Princetonian who was fifteen years the senior of White. I think it will not injure White's fame if I state here that a great deal of what he knew of American chess history and of early American chess literature (as well as of mediæval chess manuscripts) he owed to his extensive correspondence with Cook during a period of 43 years.

After Cook's death in 1915, his biographer, Dr. H. Keidanz, intended to fulfill the wish of his master. But although he collected material beyond that which Cook had already gathered, and although he was assisted by Mr. White, he could not finish the work and left it for the next generation of chess scholars. In 1927, however, he did publish the record of Cook's life and achievements in chess in a fine book entitled, The Chess Compositions of E. B. Cook of Hoboken. Curiously, however, a few copies of this book are extant with a separate title page obviously designed to serve as a second part, or appendix, to the work. This separate title page reads, "Historical Sequence of Chess Problems, By E. B. Cook, Revised and Enlarged by John G. White and Dr. H. Keidanz." On the back of this leaf was the page number 360 together with a list of abbreviations to be used in the checklist of books on chess problems. The existence of this leaf and the very detailed list of abbreviations are proof that Dr. Keidanz had planned to complete the work.
Furthermore there have appeared in various booksellers' catalogues typewritten checklists of books on chess problems in the library of John G. White. The greater part of Dr. Keldanz's own checklist, written on hundreds of small slips of paper, three inches square, are still preserved today in my own collection.

Although neither Cook nor White published anything which recorded, during their lives, their deep researches into the bibliography of chess, we are fortunate to have a part of White's investigations (and thus, indirectly, much of Cook's researches) which were incorporated in J. H. R. Murray's standard work, A History of Chess, published in 1913. The four elephant folios containing the White-Murray correspondence over a period of about thirteen years are now preserved in the Cleveland Public Library.

This brings us back again to the eventual disposition of the most famous American collections of chess books. The fate of D. W. Fiske's first chess collection remains a mystery. Von der Lasa mentioned in 1864 that Fiske, after using his books amply, had "given them away." That Fiske made a second chess collection, now in Iceland and not in Cornell University as wrongly stated in Keldanz's work, we know from letters in the Cook collection at Princeton.

Professor George Allen's collection was more completely described than any other American collection—in a catalogue prepared in 1878 by Allen's executors, shortly after his death. For more than five years the executors failed to find a purchaser. E. B. Cook, who was very active in raising the necessary $2,500 for the purchase of the collection, played a prominent part in persuading the Library Company of Philadelphia to acquire the library. In the Library Bulletin for July 1884, appeared the following note:

"The chess collection of the late Professor George Allen has recently been purchased from his heirs by the Library Company. It comprises nearly nine hundred titles, besides two hundred and fifty autograph letters and fifty photographs and engravings of chess celebrities. The library is in excellent condition, and many of the books are fine examples of bookbind-

The collection may be found today at the Ridgway Branch of the Library Company of Philadelphia.

When Charles A. Gilberg died in 1898 his famous library was held by his estate and eventually was sold for $1,100 to a New York dealer. This sale took place in 1925. About five years later it came into the possession of Mr. Silas W. Howland of New York, and Howland's enlarged collection was subsequently presented to the Harvard College Library.

The John G. White Chess and Checkers Collection, the largest of its kind in the world, is now preserved together with the voluminous White correspondences, in the Cleveland Public Library in Cleveland, Ohio.

Finally, it seems fitting to mention the cornerstone of the Cook collection—or of any chess collection: Lucena's "Treatise on the Game of Chess," which constitutes the second part of Repeticion de Amores y Arte de Juegos, published in Salamanca, Spain, about 1496. When Mr. Cook acquired this book at the peak of his collecting career in 1902 he was the first of his friendly competitors in America to make such an important addition. The significance of the book is easily understood, for it is the earliest specific treatise on chess to have been printed. To be sure, other claims have been made for this position of honor. In 1786 a Spanish bibliographer, Francisco Mendez, described an earlier printed treatise by Vincent, but no copy of this work has turned up. Other chess incunabula such as the Goldin Spiel published at Augsburg in 1472 and the different Casolius editions, including the rare Caxtons of 1474 and about 1483 are not comparable to Lucena's treatise explaining the rules of the game, for these other works are chiefly concerned with moralizations which use the chess pieces merely as symbols for their counterparts in human life.

Although the Lucena treatise is not an extremely rare book, complete copies are uncommon. At present there are at least seventeen known copies of Lucena's work and nine of these copies are owned by libraries or collectors in the Americas. Of those in the United States, copies in the collections of Cook (Princeton), White (Cleveland) and Howland (Harvard) contain only the second (chess) section. Copies which contain the first part, the Repeticion de Amores (which has nothing to do with the game of chess) and also the second and larger part, the
Ari de Acsbret, are found in the John Pierpont Morgan Library the Henry E. Huntington Library, and in the possession of Dr. A. S. W. Rosenbach. Nevertheless, none of these is a perfect copy.

The Lucena treatise is the only fifteenth century book in the Cook collection. But the importance of this collection (which is surpassed in rare books not only by the White library in Cleveland but also by the Howland library at Harvard) rests upon the voluminous letters received by Cook from his correspondents, the ephemeral pamphlets relating to the history of American chess clubs, and particularly the publications relating to chess activities in New Jersey. This wealth of material waits to be exploited by someone who may write the history of chess in America after 1859. In this American material, the Cook collection surpasses that of any other collection.

Dr. Albrecht Buschke, who very generously consented to furnish some practical orientation for Princeton’s sizeable E. B. Cook Chess Collection, submitted an exceptional and scholarly article, heavily annotated with bibliographical and factual information. Unable to present the article entire, the editors of the Chronicle offer an abbreviated version; but the original manuscript of the article is to be bound and catalogued as a worthy addition to the Cook Collection.

In January 1940, Dr. Buschke gave up his amateur standing as a collector by issuing a very attractive little sale catalogue of “Books—Periodicals—Pictures—Autographs—670 Items” relating to the game and history of chess.

Mr. Stuart Stevenson ’18 wrote to “Notes and Queries” to ask if there was available any information concerning the history of various Princeton publications, from the beginning. Unfortunately, there is not such bibliographical study, but there should be. From time to time, this department will tuck in a few notes which may accumulate.

The first serial publication at Princeton—in fact the earliest Princeton imprint—seems to have been The Princeton Packet and The GeneralAdvertiser, a newspaper, four pages, three columns each, issued weekly. According to C. S. Brigham, the first number was issued on June 22, 1786 and the paper continued for at least a year. Nevertheless, only five single copies of this newspaper are recorded today. The earliest, Volume I, Number 8 (August 10, 1786) is in the New Jersey Historical Society. The Princeton University Library has four copies: one for October 5, 1786, two copies of the issue for January 11, 1787, and one for February 22, 1787. In his History of Princeton (II, 55), Hageman states that he saw a copy, privately owned in Princeton, dated June 28, 1787 but the present location of this copy is not known.
V. L. Collins describes the establishment of this newspaper in a brochure, *Early Princeton Printing*, published in 1911. The printer was a young Scotsman, James Todd, who seems to have been encouraged by his countryman, President John Witherspoon. Todd must have issued at least fifty-two numbers, although he is known to have abandoned the enterprise in November, 1787, when he left Princeton to take charge of Erasmus Hall at Flaxbush, Long Island.

It seems incredible that Princeton garrets and attics should have failed to yield more copies of *The Princeton Packet*. If any of our readers know where other copies may be found, the Library would welcome such information, even though the proud owner has no desire to part with his treasure.

We were quite pleased, recently, to be told that one of our readers had not access to any books which threw light on the origin of the term "grangerized," as applied to extra-illustrated books. We promptly hauled out Allibone, Lownes, Dibdin and the D.N.B. in order to compile a little factual data — and before we had finished we made a very pleasant discovery. But we'll save that until the stage is set:

Rev. James Granger died of an epileptic fit, and so far as we are concerned, it served him jolly well right. Born in 1723, he fumbled through early life to a vicarage at Shiplake, Oxfordshire, where he "had the good fortune," as he put it, "to retire early to independence, obscurity and content." His friendships, accumulated through prodigious correspondences, and his liberal political views brought him sufficiently into the public eye to inspire Dr. Johnson's famous remark about him: "The dog is a whig. I do not like much to see a whig in any dress, but I hate to see a whig in a person's gown." But to be brief: Granger published his incipient atrocity in 1769. It was a four-volume *Biographical History of England* . . . *Adapted to a Methodical Catalogue of Engraved British Heads*. Quite fittingly it was dedicated to that curious and versatile antiquary, Horace Walpole. Each copy was furnished with numerous blank pages for the reception of engraved portraits and illustrations of the text. The fun was started. Before 1769, engraved prints of English notables and worthies had not been of much artistic virtue or financial value; within a short time the new hobby-riders were merrily slashing up old books and plundering print shops to find appropriate faces to fill up the "Granger."

Granger did not live to witness the sad consequence of his enterprise. He acknowledged that the first edition had earned for him about 400 Pounds; he brought out a supplement with large additions in 1774 and a second edition, four volumes, in 1775. The year following, he died. But misguided hands deftly caught the flaming torch and carried on the carnage. A third edition appeared in 1779, a fourth in 1804. Then in 1806 a three volume *Continuation* appeared, edited by Rev. Mark Noble.

The sequel was inevitable. Dealers and engravers made the best of the worst. From 1792 to 1822 there appeared several portfolios and issues in parts, containing engraved portraits which might come in handy if anyone happened to be padding out his Granger. Then, to show what could really be done with enterprise, the dealers began to make up sets to order. And the disease spread to other fields, other subjects.

We promised a surprise. To complete preliminary browsing for material on this subject, we flipped the cards to see what holdings Princeton might boast. It was not surprising to find several swollen sets—the largest expanded to twenty-seven fat folio volumes. Obviously there is abundant material here for anyone who wishes to make a first-hand study of this bibliographical phenomenon. But one set was unique. If you were asked to conjure up the most pleasant association copy to represent this most unpleasant bibliophilic pastime, you might recall that Granger dedicated the *Biographical History* to Horace Walpole; that Walpole's own copy of the first edition would be a pretty thing. It is a pretty thing, and Princeton owns it—bound in full calf, with Walpole's coat of arms on the covers, and with occasional annotations throughout, in Walpole's hand. Apparently the antiquary of Strawberry Hill could think of amusements better than rummaging about for Granger fillers. Ironically, the only, lonely illustration which may be found in this set is a frontispiece engraving of—need we tell?

—Horace Walpole.

A Friend who wishes to remain anonymous has made a contribution for books of current interest. This assistance has enabled us to purchase several additional titles for our Dixon shelf. All these contributions total $369.50.

Mr. Atterbury received contributions for expenses totaling $953.00. This money goes toward bills for printing and other charges. These contributions were received from the following Friends:

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Volume XII, Number 4
June 1941

VOLUME TWO of the Chronicle is completed with this issue. It is a good volume. Judging from comments made by several Friends we are certain that the whole group agrees with our belief. The April issue brought many evidences of real interest; it was timely and highly informative. All this compels us to repeat what has already been said more than once: The Chronicle deserves continued existence.

The publicity campaign, carried on very generously by the Princeton University Press, has helped to raise the total of paid subscriptions to 134. Plans will be made shortly for Volume Three, which is to be started next fall. In order to handle the expense of publishing that volume we shall have to continue to lean heavily upon the support of the Friends. Although it is the policy that the Friends are to receive the Chronicle free, more and more members are sending checks to cover their copies. Such checks are treated as contributions towards printing expenses.

CONTRIBUTIONS AND GIFTS
Since the April issue of the Chronicle contributions for books have been very generously made by E. Byrne Hackett, Francis H. Payne '91, George M. Priest '94, Henry L. Savage '15, and John H. Scheide '96. These contributions enabled us to secure

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Several manuscripts and books have come to the Library as gifts from the Friends since the last issue of the Chronicle. A few of these follow: From James Boyd ’10, revised radio scripts of three plays given by The Free Company over the Columbia Broadcasting System; from John F. Joline, Jr. ’07, fourteen books and pamphlets of history and literature; from Sterling Morton ’06, file of The Conservative; from William A. B. Paul ’18, ten items of American history interest; from George M. Priest ’94, a splendid letter from Stockton Axson dated November 5, 1920, and two typed letters signed by Woodrow Wilson dated March 19, 1915 and May 23, 1917; from Booth Tarkington ’93, the manuscript and three typed copies of his play Polduk; from Willard Thorp, Yvor Winters’ typescript of an essay of “On the Possibility of a Co-operative History of American Literature,” the statements by Princeton undergraduates used by Thorp in writing, “As the College Man sees the War,” published in The New York Times, March 23, 1941, also thirty-five movie stills for the William Seymour Theatre Collection together with ten volumes of literary and historical interest.

Gifts were also received from the following Friends:

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