Fall 1992

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Miss Clara Peck, Book Collector

Robert Nikirk

When the small world of book collecting learned of the death of Miss Clara Sargent Peck on 20 April 1982, many of us reached for the fat biography of her favorite bookseller, Dr. A.S.W. Rosenbach.¹ There our collective memories were refreshed by anecdote after anecdote of Miss Peck's collecting triumphs. Now the fruits of her collecting have been scattered far and wide by her bequests—wider collecting and wider scattering than you may have even dreamed. Her book and manuscript bequests were top news in the rare book world, and Transylvania University in Lexington, Kentucky, may expect attention in that department in the future.

In preparing for this paper through research and interviews, I soon realized that it would not be possible to paint a picture of Miss Peck or bring to life her personality. I never met her. My task is to unfold the remarkable legacy of a remarkable woman—one of the comparatively few women, by the way, who have carved a real niche as a book collector.

Miss Peck was born in upstate central New York and as a young woman lived in Brooklyn before the First World War. Her father had an early association with Frank W. Woolworth and left her a very wealthy woman at a comparatively early age. When quite young, she participated in the long-defunct but once fashionable Brooklyn horse show at the Riding and Driving Club there. Her love of horses was later a main theme of her book collection, but her love of fine cars did not manifest itself in book collecting, as far as I know. Her affection for horses extended outward to wildlife generally, and her collecting took several directions involving animals in art and literature.

Her bequest to Transylvania has come under circumstances unknown to me, except that I heard she had a long-time interest in the University and that she had maintained a horse farm in Lexington for years. As I reckon it, she left Transylvania just over 500 items, most of them books but including at least nineteen sets of horse-oriented periodicals. Of these, I calculate 37% are books about the horse in greater or lesser specialization; 26% are of that
wide spectrum called "sporting books"—and this reaches from the year 1496 to early nineteenth-century England and America; 10% are what I would call natural history books, crowned by the Audubon double elephant folio, and the remaining 27% deal with various subjects embracing juvenile fiction, the American West, and some bibliography.

In a brief summary such as this, it is not possible to analyse each category in great detail, but it is possible to outline Miss Peck's various interests and to choose a few crown jewels to describe in some detail. Her collecting and her bequests reveal some surprising turns.

The horse books are primarily English and American, with important European examples from the sixteenth through the eighteenth century. Works by the important writer Gervase Markham (d. 1637), who is said to have imported the first Arab horse into England, are among many important rare editions. Horse books also cross over into the area of the "courtesy book," or what a gentleman should know about horses. The phrase "sporting books" immediately recalls the Golden Age of Regency England, of Alken and Surtees and Company—fresh, noble, color plate books bursting with an ideal and colorful outdoor country life untouched by the Industrial Revolution outside the squire's park. But in the Peck collection, sporting books reach all the way back to the late Middle Ages, to falconry, or hawking, to boar and deer hunting, to dogs, to fishing, eventually closing with sport in the woods and fields of nineteenth and early twentieth century America, especially that of the West.

The expression "natural history books" covers specialized and scientific works on the animal world, and in Miss Peck's case, birds and quadrupeds are found in English and American publications in particular. So far as I can find out, Miss Peck began collecting around 1930, and her first major purchase may have been a spectacular natural history book, the Audubon double elephant folio—more of that later.

Clara Peck enters the recorded history of American collecting, however, when she began to buy from the inimitable Dr. A.S.W. Rosenbach of Philadelphia and New York. The story of American book collecting on the grand scale in the first half of the twentieth century is largely the story of "Dr. R." Fortunately, it has been captured in a magnificent biography of 616 pages published in 1960 and written by a former staff member and cousin, Edwin
Wolf, and by Wolf's successor at the Rosenbach firm, John Fleming. Fleming, who died in 1987, was among the very few people the increasingly reclusive Miss Peck would see in her later years.

Dr. Rosenbach died in July 1952, and Miss Peck therefore knew him for exactly twenty years. During this time she bought her greatest books, and some of these transactions will be recounted here. Rosenbach was a genuine Ph.D. in Elizabethan literature from the University of Pennsylvania, and he believed that book collecting was the greatest game in the world. Always short in the cash flow department, he could talk books up to a convenient millionaire, thus paying the rent for another month. He would go way out on a limb at big auctions, pay top dollar, get his picture in the paper, then wake up with auction hangover and a lot of unpaid-for books. But not for long! He entranced three generations of American collectors, especially with English literature and historical Americana, building up collections which are today found coast to coast, or which have been dispersed at auction. Hard-drinking, fast-talking, learned, charming, convincing—Dr. Rosenbach enlivened the book collecting scene for nearly fifty years.

No one could be further from the temperament of the shy Miss Clara S. Peck. Dr. R's successor, John Fleming, told me how Miss Peck got to know the Rosenbach firm. Rosenbach had a manager named Percy E. Lawler. Mr. Lawler had a secretary who had a great friend named Miss Jones whose business it was to make hand-painted Christmas cards. Miss Peck was a client of Miss Jones, who told her she should visit the Rosenbach shop where her friend worked for Mr. Lawler. That is how it all started—with Dr. Rosenbach, at any rate—although she purchased from other booksellers through the years. Her first purchases came from the library of Prince Stroganoff, a Russian exile whose family had a great English sporting library.

By 1937, Rosenbach was selling Miss Peck books of such high value—even for those Depression days—that he regarded her as his Queen in a deck that included Arthur A. Houghton, Jr., as King, Frank J. Hogan as Jack, and John H. Scheide as Ten. But, John Fleming has stressed to me, she absolutely had a mind of her own, and nothing could persuade her to buy something she did not want, and bargains were of no interest to her. And, after the death of Rosenbach, that pattern continued through the 1950s and
1960s with John Fleming. In conversation he has recalled her splendid Hispano-Suizas and Dusenbergs, and says her deep love of the American West stems from extensive motor trips with her faithful chauffeur, Joseph.

Miss Peck had a special liking for "books in parts"—that is, books issued in installments, especially in early nineteenth-century England. Finding these in near-perfect condition has been a collector's game for four generations, and certain booksellers have conducted lively backroom workshops specializing in making less-than-perfect copies acceptable. Miss Peck also belonged to a generation of collectors who were not looking to find their rare books in "original" bindings. Top condition was expected, but within the rules for the time. Since the early nineteenth century, at least, old books had generally been washed and flattened and put into elaborate morocco leather bindings, complete with slipcase or box. Today, collectors seek copies in original paper or pasteboard covers, or in a vellum or leather binding put on close to the date of publication.

The cornerstone of Miss Peck's collection is the English book now always referred to by its place of printing, the ancient cathedral city of St. Albans, twenty-five miles northwest of London, or simply as The Book of St. Albans. It was printed in 1486 by a mysterious printer known only to us as The Schoolmaster Printer. Nothing is known about him except the products of his press between about 1480 and this last production, 1486, of which Miss Peck was the proud owner of one of only three known complete copies.

The book was purportedly written by a semi-mythical woman, named Dame Juliana Berners, or Barnes, who may or may not have been born around 1388. She was supposedly a prioress of Sopwell, near the abbey church in St. Albans. Her treatise is about hawking and hunting, and includes two other sections on heraldry. This fabulous book proved irresistible to Miss Peck, who acquired it from Rosenbach in 1935. Rosenbach and John Fleming were busy in December of that year, readying bids for a major auction. But when Miss Peck walked in, Dr. R. put all aside for the drama of a major sale to a major client. As Wolf and Fleming tell the story, she heard a performance in which Rosenbach wonderfully "wove his adjectives and expletives."
The first sporting book written by a woman had real appeal to a woman collector of sporting books. As the Doctor turned the pages of the fine Pembroke-Phelan copy, he waxed more and more eloquent. Miss Peck was visibly impressed. "How much is it, Mr. Fleming?" she asked, turning to Dr. Rosenbach's assistant, who stood at his elbow. Before John had a chance to answer, the Doctor boomed out, "$24,000, and I wouldn't sell it to another person for less than $40,000. My God, I'll never see another copy for sale in my lifetime. I paid John J. Phelan more than that for it ten years ago." "Do you really think I ought to buy it?" Miss Peck ventured. This time Fleming had a chance to answer, "Yes, I do, Miss Peck." And so, Miss Peck, with a printed book that was the cornerstone of any sporting library, took rank among the important collectors of the country, and John Fleming had made his first big sale.  

The mystery of its disputed authorship will never be solved, though it is just possible that it was composed by a gentlewoman who was perfectly familiar with country sports, then as now popular with the English landed gentry. Here is her first prologue:

In so much that gentlemen and honest persons have great delight in hawking and desire to have the manner to take hawks; and also how and in what wise they should give them; and to know the gentle [correct] terms in communing with their hawks; and to understand their sicknesses and infirmities and to know medicines for them according. And many notable terms that have been used in hawking, both of their hawks and the fowls that their hawks shall slay. Therefore this book following in due form shows true knowledge of such pleasure to gentlemen and persons disposed to see it.

Of the nine examples in the United States, the Peck copy is distinguished for its provenance and the fact that it is complete with eighty-eight leaves. It came out of the ancestral library at Wilton and was sold by the Earl of Pembroke in June 1914, along with a goodly batch of other staggering early printed books. Dr. R. sold it to John T. Phelan, a sometime collector, who sold it back in 1923. He promptly vanished from the face of the earth,
John Fleming told me. At $24,000 in 1935, it was a bargain. Today it is impossible to know its value. Other American copies are in the Morgan, at Yale, Indiana University, the Huntington, among other sites. With Dame Juliana Berners’s *Book of St. Albans*, Transylvania owns the very first in the long line of English sporting books.

One of the greatest jewels in Miss Peck’s collection is the excessively rare first printing of *The Book of the Hunt*, by Gaston, Count of Foix, who lived from 1331 to 1391. Circulated in many manuscripts since its composition between 1387 and 1389, it finally reached print in 1507, by Antoine Vérard, the enterprising Paris publisher and printer.

Books about hunting were one of several types of printed books popular with the French nobility, as much as romances of chivalry, another big stock in trade. The nobility, after all, had the leisure to hunt, when they were not away at war, and were also more apt to be able to read. Books on hunting were so popular, in fact, that they must have been worn out because as a type of sixteenth-century book, they are quite rare.

Our Gaston, the third of his name as Count of Foix, lived on a large domain in southern France, about fifty miles southeast of Toulouse, in a castle whose towers may still be seen today. He was renowned for his good looks and was nicknamed Phoebus, after Apollo, because of his blond hair. He was famous for his valor, his generosity, his buildings, and his all-around magnificence. His treatise on hunting, or *Livre de la Chasse*, was thus written from wide experience, gained even, it is said, from hunting exotic quarry in Sweden.

To judge from the forty-four surviving manuscripts—about which more later—and three printed editions, Gaston Phoebus’s book was one of the most popular and influential of all medieval treatises on the hunt. Its four books describe the habits and habitats of various wild animals; the breeds, illnesses, and peculiarities of hunting dogs; the hunting of wild animals, both on foot and horseback; and the snaring of animals in traps. A very Kentucky book, you might say.

A quick check indicated to me that Transylvania’s Gaston of Foix’s 1507 first edition is probably one of only three copies in America. The Peck Collection at Transylvania is also fortunate in owning a popular companion treatise on hunting, the oddly-named *Le Roy Modus et la Reine Ratio*, Paris, 1521, which translated
sounds even odder: “The Book of King Practice and Queen Theory.”

Gaston of Foix’s text and Le Roy Modus were later rivaled by a new work by Jacques de Fouilloux on hunting, first published in 1561. The Peck Collection has the Poitiers edition of circa 1566. This group is a marvelous demonstration of how original sources may be used for scholarly purposes in a university.

But this book had a distinguished ancestor in Miss Peck’s collection which I must mention—a magnificent illuminated manuscript of Gaston’s text with eighty-seven large miniature paintings probably made in Paris around 1410 for John the Good, Duke of Brittany, within a generation of its original composition. It was the most spectacular and valuable item in Miss Peck’s collection and was left last year to the Pierpont Morgan Library. Transylvania should take some comfort in this, because the Morgan Library does have the most important collection of medieval manuscripts in America, but very little money to add to it. The Morgan could never have afforded this Gaston manuscript had it come on the market.

The document has a fascinating story, and, according to Wolf and Fleming, it was the greatest manuscript that Rosenbach ever owned. “Created in 1387, it was a century later a wedding present to Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain. It was looted from the Escorial during the Napoleonic Wars, bought by the greatest of all English collectors, Sir Thomas Phillips, and purchased in turn from his grandson by Dr. Rosenbach in 1928 for £10,000.” It contained eighty-seven hunting scenes, all as fresh as when they were created. Philadelphia’s great dealer had thought of pricing this Livre de la Chasse at a quarter of a million dollars. In 1928, however, Pierpont Morgan found that he was unable to afford it at $105,000, irresistible though it seemed. Rosenbach was a collector himself, as the Rosenbach Foundation collection in Philadelphia still attests, and his attitude toward the sale of the work of Gaston has been described as painfully schizophrenic. Given the demands of a new shop and a need for ready cash, however, he at last offered it to Miss Peck in 1943 for $65,000. She did not refuse.

With natural history books, and, in particular, bird books, Transylvania has arrived at the forefront with one swoop, one might say, with a work which is the envy—and despair—of the whole world, one of the most famous books in the world. I refer,
of course, to John James Audubon’s *The Birds of America* in the original format, known, because of its size, as the double elephant folio. Publication was completed in early 1839. The story of Audubon’s *Birds of America* cannot be told in a straight line, however, for its creation was very confused and full of difficulties.

John James Audubon was born in 1785 in Les Cayes, Santo Domingo, the illegitimate son of Jean Audubon, an agent for a French mercantile firm, and later a sea-captain, and his Creole mistress. Not surprisingly, in later life, J. J. was evasive about his origins, even encouraging the legend that he was the lost son of King Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette. After a childhood spent in France, during which he drew, collected, and stuffed birds found on countryside rambles, he was sent off to a farm near Philadelphia in 1803 when his father suddenly lost his money when France lost Santo Domingo. A failure as a merchant’s apprentice, J. J. moved as a tenant to property owned by his father as an investment but farmed by another man. His days were spent not in hard work and the practice of thrift, but rambling the Pennsylvania woods and fields with dog and gun, always with a keen eye for birds, and a growing ability to render them in color with lifelike appearance. He fell in love with a local girl, Lucy Bakewell, whom he married in 1808 over her father’s strenuous objections.

Mrs. Audubon never had an easy life as J. J.’s wife, for he was hardly a good provider. He had no business ability, and venture after venture failed. Even moving to Louisville, Kentucky, did not help, though while there he did meet the famous American ornithologist Alexander Wilson, whose very important pioneering work, called *American Ornithology*, was published in 1829. In 1819, while living in Henderson, Kentucky, Audubon’s fortunes reached their lowest point, and Lucy’s ever-reluctant father had to bail him out of bankruptcy. Portrait painting became his trade, and the family moved to Cincinnati, then to New Orleans, where he added fencing and dancing instruction to eke out a living.

But all this time his bird drawing had continued, even to the point of taking on a gifted pupil, Joseph Mason, who filled in the habitat background. Deciding in early 1824 that his future must lay with his bird drawings, he managed to return to Philadelphia and soon met many distinguished people, such as Thomas Sully, the leading painter (of the Gratz family, among others) and Charles Lucien Bonaparte, a distinguished ornithologist and nephew of Napoleon. He also made enemies, notably by finding
fault in scientific circles with Alexander Wilson's work. He criticized Titian Peale, who was illustrating Bonaparte's work in progress, by stating that he represented birds "as if seated for a portrait." He alienated his faithful pupil, Joseph Mason, by leaving Mason's name off their joint work, an action sadly not atypical of Audubon.

One good thing developed during Audubon's 1824 Philadelphia visit. Gideon Fairman, a local engraver of note, told Audubon that if he expected to get his work published, then he must visit England. Two years later, the artist sailed from New Orleans to Liverpool. With him he carried two years of savings and 400 original bird drawings.

Good luck, with good connections, attended him once again. The American consul, a Bostonian named Brookes, advised him to proceed with a subscription scheme—to get people to pay in advance for all or part of the projected work. Even though Audubon's drawings were nowhere near finished enough for reproduction purposes, he persisted in his belief that they must be reproduced life-size, hence the double elephant folio format for which they are known.

In Scotland he was honored as a man of science among equals and ever after took great pride in knowing Sir Walter Scott. His exotic appearance, personality, and undoubted abilities as a genuine contributor to ornithological knowledge, made him really quite sought after, in the manner of successful Americans abroad, from Pocahontas onward. An arrangement to prepare plates of his depictions of the birds, for reproduction in color, was made with a Scottish engraver. Audubon was free at last to sell subscriptions hither and yon. Meanwhile, new bird drawings had to be perfected if the issuing of parts was to be kept on schedule. The Audubon double elephant folio was issued sporadically in printed paper covers holding five plates each, a common method of publication throughout the nineteenth century, whether for pictorial works such as Audubon's or for popular literature such as novels by Dickens or Thackeray.

Unfortunately, the arrangement with his Scottish engraver was short-lived, for the colorists, those who skillfully applied color for the birds by hand, went on strike. Moreover, Audubon was unhappy that his engraver was working simultaneously on another ornithological book, which he not unreasonably regarded as a conflict of interest.
He finally found the perfect collaborator in Robert Havell, Jr., from a well-known family of British artists and aquatinters, and apparently there was no cloud on their happy collaboration, which lasted fourteen years. Havell was known as a calm, devoted, and persevering type whose personality complemented Audubon's.

Picture, if you will, a copper engraving plate the size of Audubon's folio, and imagine the difficulty in printing it. Havell was given free reign to make certain adjustments such as "collaging" two or more birds on one plate and filling in backgrounds. Audubon never had a complaint except about the lettering.

After years of fund-raising, travelling from Labrador to Florida to paint birds, and living from hand to mouth the whole time, the vast project of *The Birds of America* was completed in eighty-seven parts of 435 plates in early 1839. Eighty-two subscribers were American and seventy-nine were British and European. They included King George IV, the Library of Congress, the British nobility and gentry, the scientific community, and also French institutions. Also included were Mr. Garnett Duncan and Dr. John Creghan of Louisville, Kentucky, and Henry Clay III, at Ashland. By bizarre coincidence, all three of these original Kentucky copies appear to have vanished. As reckoned today, current Kentucky copies are in the Audubon State Park Museum in Henderson, at Berea College, and at Transylvania University.

Books of renown have a place in the economy as well as on the shelf, and the Audubon folio is one of the revered monuments of Americana. When Christie's auction house held their first New York book sale in 1977, they made history by selling a double elephant folio for $396,000. In 1982, they sold another copy for $1,541,265, but as separate plates rather than as a complete book. Then, in June of 1983, the 1977 copy was sold again at Sotheby's (New York)—this time broken up into separate plates (regarded by some as despicable business)—which fetched $1.7 million. At the time of this writing, Christie's has a set on the premises which they are trying to sell privately for $2 million. So it goes.

Poor Audubon—he ended his days on a farm in upper Manhattan, on land still called Audubon Terrace, west of Broadway at 155th Street. He died in January 1851 at age 66. His faithful wife, Lucy, sold the original drawings, minus four, to the New-York Historical Society for $4,000, raised by public subscription. The family copy of the double elephant folio is now...
in the J. H. Lutcher Stark Foundation in Orange, Texas.

We do not know the owner of the Peck-Transylvania set. Miss Peck bought it, bound in four volumes, from Frank Walters, a little-known New York dealer, in partnership with Ronald MacDonald, a very well-known New York bookbinder, who must have found it through a client. Years later it was found to be missing eight plates, which were filled in from a broken set being sold by E. Weyhe, the book and print dealer. For a lover of animals and birds such as Miss Peck, it was the Book of Books.

From among the works in the Peck Collection, there is one which seems to offer a special charm. It is Descrizioni Degli Animali Quadrupedi, regarded as the finest Venetian natural history book of the eighteenth century, and it consists of some two hundred pictures by the artists Allesandri and Scattaglia.

During the final decline of the Venetian Republic in the eighteenth century, Venice had become the largest publishing center in Italy, producing in particular lavish illustrated books both for its home market and shipment abroad. Her publishers were in tune with contemporary tastes, and bookshops were regarded as international meeting places. Export laws were particularly advantageous to publishers of luxury books.

The leading publishers had at their beck and call a host of greater or lesser artists, including Tiepolo, Piazzetta, Novelli, and Bartolozzi. The standard of engraving for these incredible rococo confections was also high—remembering that the famous artists who made the illustration drawings only rarely engraved their own work. Thus, for the first time in two or three hundred years, important artists devoted much of their time and talents to book illustration.

The Venetian example in the Peck collection is not by a Tiepolo or a Piazzetta, but by two artists so little-known that they are hardly recorded at all. But this book proves the point that so high was the level of creativity in the eighteenth century that minor artists working for a minor publisher could produce a minor masterpiece. It comes through as a labor of love, of wit, of charm, and of elegance.

I have already mentioned the fabulous Livre de la Chasse manuscript of circa 1410 which Miss Peck left to the Morgan Library, but I must mention two other bequests there because each is the most important of its kind in the United States.

The earlier is a huge manuscript written in Austria between
1400 and 1450, a copy of a treatise originally written in the 1350s by Abbot Ulrich of Liliienfeld, a Cistercian monastery near Vienna. It is called the *Concordantia Caritatis* or “Concordances of the Love of God.” In it, events in the life of Christ are compared with Old Testament prophecies and stories which were regarded as prefigurations of the New Testament event, a demonstration of the medieval love of balance. In Abbot Ulrich’s work, 156 New Testament examples are given in addition to eighty-two stories of saints. It was intended to provide sermon material.

Of the twenty-four known *Concordantia* manuscripts, six are illustrated, only three are complete, and Miss Peck’s is far and away the most important one except for the author’s own, still preserved in Austria. In addition to its 127 full-page miniature paintings, it contains 144 full-page drawings ready for the painter but never filled thus. The drawings are of a much higher level than the miniatures, thus providing the Morgan Library and the United States with the most important corpus of late medieval Austrian drawings outside of Europe. The manuscript comes from the collection of the princes of Lichtenstein and was bought through the New York dealers Schab and Kraus.

Why did Miss Peck take this flyer into theological esoterica? It is because each of the 127 painted pages and the 144 drawn pages includes superbly illustrated animal fables intended to demonstrate Bible stories and prophecies. They are lively and sometimes witty depictions of all kinds of creatures, and these must have appealed to Miss Peck’s instinctive sympathy for animals.

The third great Peck manuscript is of a wholly different character, but of equally high quality. It is called “A Natural History of the Indies,” and it is a tall folio of 200 watercolor drawings of animals, fish, plants, and Indian life of the Caribbean islands as well as Panama, Peru, Florida, and even of Roanoke. It was apparently compiled by a French sailor who accompanied Sir Francis Drake in 1577-1580 or 1585-1586 and who made this collection around 1590. It is important because it is the first depiction of many of the specimens shown and is especially important for Indian ethnology; it shows mining and metalworking and even slaves at work. Many plant and animal names are first recorded in it, as well. The illustrations of squash, pumpkins, tomatoes, pimientos, and bananas are delightful, and so are the animals. Miss Peck must have liked these animals depicted with so much personality. She bought the manuscript at auction in 1946.
for £2,900. It has already been studied carefully by a specialist from the Smithsonian, who has proposed a facsimile edition with scientific commentary.4

A final few strokes of the brush will help one to gain a sense of Miss Peck as a collector—in this case, not of books—and as a philanthropist. In 1978, the Corning Museum of Glass in Corning, New York, was able to borrow several nineteenth-century French paperweights from Miss Peck for an international exhibition in the summer months. The collection had to be tracked to her through a publication of years before. Though exceedingly reclusive in her suite at the Pierre Hotel, where she had lived since the 1930s, she was cautiously agreeable to the loan of a few paperweights when the director called on her with the president of the Museum of Glass. The latter she had known when he was director of the Brooklyn Museum in the 1960s.

Now the story gets to be really complicated. It so happens that Corning, New York, has a new, rather small, but very distinguished museum of Western American art—some call it “cowboys and Indians” art—collected by a local department store owner named Robert Rockwell. It is handsomely installed in the renovated City Hall, built in the 1890s, and saved from the wrecker’s ball. Miss Peck collected important Western art, too, which did not go unnoticed by the Museum of Glass visitors when they called on her at the Pierre. To make a long story short, just after her death, both museums learned she had left them important bequests: 160 nineteenth-century French glass paperweights to the Corning Museum of Glass, and to the Rockwell Museum, some twenty-nine items, including oils and watercolors by George Catlin, Alfred Jacob Miller, and Charles M. Russell, the first bequests of any kind to this new and unusual museum. The staffs and trustees of the two institutions were absolutely stormed by this unexpected good fortune. Her new will was signed only three months before her death. Both institutions benefited, as well, from her residuary estate. Miss Peck also owned a splendid Persian Shah Nameh manuscript, dated 1589, which has joined the collections of Princeton University.

There were other interesting bequests, as well. The American Museum of Natural History was left a group of Fabergé animals, which will join that museum’s gemological collection. The National Sporting Library, Inc., of Middleburg, Virginia, received several important paintings, including a George Stubbs painted on
Wedgewood china. Apparently this is a big oval object and is considered to be an important work by Stubbs.

And, it should be noted, moreover, that Transylvania University has benefited from Miss Peck's art interests. Three notable paintings are now in Lexington as a result of her affection for the Bluegrass. These include an animal painting, "Mase-Deer," by J. J. Audubon; a painting of a bird by Audubon's son, John Woodhouse Audubon; and a painting of a California buzzard by Titian Ramsey Peale.

Miss Peck was truly a collector and connoisseur. Through Dr. Rosenbach, John Fleming, and a few others, she made very significant acquisitions of notable books; and, in addition to assembling a superb library, she also developed an impressive collection of paintings and other art objects. She has now left a wonderful legacy of magnificent books and paintings in Lexington. With the arrival of the Peck Collection, Transylvania's already very valuable collections have assumed a new significance indeed in the world of libraries.

NOTES

*This is the edited text of a lecture delivered at the dedication of the Clara S. Peck Collection, Transylvania University, Lexington, Kentucky, 24 March 1984. Published courtesy of the estate of Robert Nikirk. The assistance of Mr. Kimball Higgs, the Grolier Club of the City of New York, is acknowledged gratefully, as is the assistance of Ms. Carolyn Denton, Curator of Special Collections, Transylvania University.

2 Wolf and Fleming, Rosenbach, p. 420.
4 Wolf and Fleming, Rosenbach, p. 538.