Library Notes: Selected Acquisitions [v. 7, no. 1]

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Selected Acquisitions

Kentuckiana
The Henry Clay collection has been augmented by a splendid broadside, printed on satin, of Clay’s farewell address to the United States Senate. Recent acquisitions also include two undated, hand-colored Nathaniel Currier lithographic bust portraits of Clay with similar yet distinctly different backgrounds. Each carries the caption, “Henry Clay, Nominated for Eleventh President of the United States,” the office which eluded him when James K. Polk was elected eleventh president in 1844.

Another interesting piece of Kentuckiana is Governor James Garrard’s appointment of Robert Mosby as Justice of the Quarterly Session Court for Mercer County, dated 2 January 1798. This small broadside is particularly noteworthy not only because it includes the signatures of Governor Garrard and his Secretary of State, Harry Toulmin, but also because it is an imprint attributed to the office of pioneer printers John and Fielding Bradford.

A fascinating collection of Civil War diaries and letters is contained in the papers of John Thomas Ashbrook, a Confederate officer who served with Gen. John Hunt Morgan’s Second Kentucky Cavalry and with Capt. John Desha’s First Kentucky Regiment. While at Harper’s Ferry, Virginia, on 14 June 1861, Lieutenant Ashbrook observed the explosion of the Potomac Bridge from the Virginia side and noted in his journal: “... that portion of the bridge was instantly a complete wreck ... The fire ... was the finest, the most gorgeous and magnificent ever witnessed. The flames fairly rolled and licked the air. The dark, dense columns of smoke curled ... & rose up above the mountain heights.” Two diaries cover events from April of 1861 to April of 1862. On 29 June 1864 Morgan replied by telegram to Mrs. Ashbrook, and by letter the day following, assuring her of the safety of her husband. Just over a month afterwards, however, on 4 September, Morgan himself was killed at Greeneville, Tennessee.
The William H. Townsend Lincoln Collection

Mrs. Joseph H. Murphy, Jr., daughter of the late Lincoln scholar William H. Townsend, has recently donated her father’s papers to the University of Kentucky Libraries. Mr. Townsend, a native of Anderson County, began collecting as a youth. (His first significant acquisition was a rusty ten-pound cannon ball, gotten from a neighbor.) His remarkable Abraham Lincoln collection contains several hundred pamphlets relating to Lincoln's life and career, numerous sales catalogues offering Lincolniana, as well as Townsend’s personal correspondence and seven scrapbooks which he compiled over a thirty-five year span, from 1909 to 1944. The scrapbooks feature Lincoln and his Springfield home. There are also two scrapbooks, 1884-1912, which were compiled by Capt. O. H. Oldroyd. The papers also include photographs, research notes on a variety of Lincoln topics, manuscript material from Mr. Townsend’s Lincoln and His Wife’s Home Town (1929), the manuscript of Katherine Helm’s The True Story of Mary, Wife of Lincoln (1928), along with her correspondence, and a section on Cassius M. Clay. In addition, the libraries are fortunate to have acquired Mr. Townsend’s substantial library of Lincolniana.

Books from River House

Mrs. Marvin Breckinridge Patterson of Washington, D.C., has recently made a generous gift of books from the library of her York, Maine estate, River House. A number of the books bear evidence of previous ownership by earlier members of her family, including the four-volume Works of Frederick Schiller (London, 1872) that belonged to Mrs. Patterson’s grandfather, industrialist B. F. Goodrich.

The collection contains a Mark Twain first edition, A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court (1889), illustrated by Cincinnatian Dan Beard. Literary first editions by Joel Chandler Harris, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Ellen Glasgow, Elizabeth Madox Roberts, Willa Cather, and James Lane Allen are present, as well. In addition to an interesting provincial imprint in Robert Dinsmoor’s Incidental Poems, printed at Haverhill, New Hampshire in 1828, and the copy of Isobel Strong’s Robert Louis Stevenson (1911) from the library of celebrated American bibliophile Herschel V. Jones, the Patterson gift includes a diverse gathering of works in literature, history, and politics. A thoughtful
tribute to Mrs. Patterson and her late husband, diplomat Jefferson Patterson, appears in Herbert Feis's inscription to The Changing Pattern of International Affairs (1940): "This was rewritten in your living room, and undoubtedly the best parts."

**British Literature**

Several recent acquisitions in the field of British literature develop the libraries' holdings of eighteenth-century ballad collections. One of the earliest of the period is Allan Ramsay's *The Ever Green, Being a Collection of Scots Poems, Wrote by the Ingenious Before 1600*. The work was first published at Edinburgh in two volumes in 1724 and contains, among other examples, "The Devils Advyce to his Freinds" [sic], "The Battle of Harlowe," and "Headstrang Youth Advised to Keep a Hank in Hand" [sic]. The University of Kentucky's copy is in an armorial binding of contemporary calf and contains the bookplate of Lord Bruce of Ampthill.

The best known of the eighteenth-century authorities on ballad literature was Thomas Percy, Bishop of Dromore, whose *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765) remains a classic source. In 1771 he published his original *Hermit of Warkworth: A Northumbrian Ballad in Three Fits or Cantos*, a work ridiculed by the staid neoclassicist Samuel Johnson. The libraries have recently acquired a copy of *The Hermit of Warkworth*, which contains a copperplate engraving by Isaac Taylor, of Ongar, father to a little circle of talented artists and poets, Ann, Jane (who wrote "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star"), and Isaac, Jr. (who also was a copperplate engraver).

The libraries have obtained, too, Joseph Ritson's *Select Collection of English Songs* (1783). An energetic collector of ballads and a productive editor, Ritson includes in this work an "Historical Essay on the Origin and Progress of National Song." The music in the third volume is set from types rather than engraved.

Several significant acquisitions have also been made among publications of the succeeding generation of writers. These include Sir Walter Scott's second book, *Goetz of Berlichingen, with The Iron Hand: A Tragedy*, two translations from the German of Goethe, published at London in 1799. Also of interest to students of the Romantic poets is *The Keepsake for 1830*, a good example of the numerous "annuals" or "gift books" of the period, many of
which contained original contributions by leading literary figures. The 1830 *Keepsake*, for example, contains works by Scott, Byron, Coleridge, and Mary Shelley as well as writing by significant lesser figures such as William Roscoe, William Jerdan, and Lady Caroline Lamb.

The Hill Shine Fund, sponsored by the Department of English, has provided for the purchase of two titles by the Victorian man of letters Thomas Carlyle. These include the four-volume *Critical and Miscellaneous Essays* (1839) and *The Life of John Sterling* (1851).

Mr. Paul Baker of Madison, Wisconsin, has made a valuable addition to our holdings of nineteenth-century British fiction with the gift of a first edition of Charles Dickens's *Master Humphrey's Clock*, published in London by Chapman and Hall in 1840. The work illustrates the Victorian practice of publishing fiction in "triple decker," or three-volume format. The libraries also hold *Master Humphrey's Clock* in the other major nineteenth-century form of publication for fiction, that of serialized "parts." Together, these two specimens of a Dickens novel provide a valuable insight into historic publishing practices as well as into the literary artistry of Charles Dickens.

**A New First Edition of Rafinesque**

Constantine S. Rafinesque, one of America's pioneering naturalists, lived in Lexington, Kentucky, from 1818 to 1826. Here he taught natural history and modern languages at Transylvania University and published several books. Although rough preliminary notes for several of Rafinesque's lectures are preserved among his manuscripts, Dr. Charles Boewe of Louisville, the Rafinesque scholar and bibliographer, examined in Philadelphia some time ago a notebook containing the actual finished text for one Lexington presentation of 1820. It is entitled "On Botany." Dr. Boewe has since transcribed the lecture and prepared an informative introductory essay. These have been published at the Whippoorwill Press of Transylvania's Prof. J. Hill Hamon under the title *On Botany* (1820). The University of Kentucky recently added to its collection a copy of this charming first edition of Rafinesque.
Two Kentuckians on Intelligence
The libraries have acquired two works by Kentucky writers dealing with intelligence-gathering activities of the American government and military. Thomas Parrish’s *The Ultra Americans: The U.S. Role in Breaking the Nazi Codes* (1986) explores the work of Americans who, working with the British, penetrated Axis radio communications during World War II. *The CIA and the U.S. Intelligence System* (1986), part of a key series on Federal departments, agencies, and systems, is also a recent addition to the collections. Its Lexington author, Scott D. Breckinridge, is a former administrator of the CIA.

Modern Fine Printing
The book arts collection has recently been enriched by the acquisition of Christopher Skelton’s *The Engraved Bookplates of Eric Gill*, published in 1986 by the San Francisco-based Book Club of California. Gill, the influential English artist, sculptor, mason, letter-cutter, and type-designer, made many contributions to the delightful tradition of the bookplate. Among the distinguished bibliophiles whose bookplates are shown in the volume are Sir Francis Meynell (1914), Sir John Rothenstein (1920), Philip Hofer (1928), and Dr. Desmond Flower (1932). Another attractive and recently acquired book arts publication is Floyd McClure’s *Chinese Handmade Paper*, published by papermaker and printer Henry Morris of North Hills, Pennsylvania.

A further valuable addition to the collection of modern fine printing is *The Polyglot Psalter*. This work was published in 1984 at the Polyglot Press, a Lexington private press which not only pursues a specialized interest in multilingual texts but also in meeting, as well, the typographical challenges of fitting words in a particular text to appropriate historical dress. Hence Psalm 31 is here printed in various translations and typefaces—the Latin of the Vulgate appears in the conservative Caslon face, the Italian of Dante in the fine roman called Forum, the German of Martin Luther in Goudy Text, and the French of Clement Marot in the elegant Civilité. The work is printed on Arches paper from France and enclosed in a gray portfolio.

—Claire McCann and James D. Birchfield