

# Caxtonian

A Newsletter of The Caxton Club of Chicago

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## A Forgotten Treasure of Thomas More, "A Man For All Seasons"

Scarcely 70 years separate the publication of two of the most important folio works of the English Renaissance: *The English Works of Thomas More* in 1557, and Shakespeare's *First Folio* in 1623. These two volumes stand apart in English literature for reasons both literary and historical. More's work and life were certainly an influence on Shakespeare. The most famous of More's works in the 1557 folio, *The History of Richard III*, was Shakespeare's chief source for his play of that name; and it is generally accepted that Shakespeare had a hand in writing part of the Elizabethan play entitled *Sir Thomas More*.

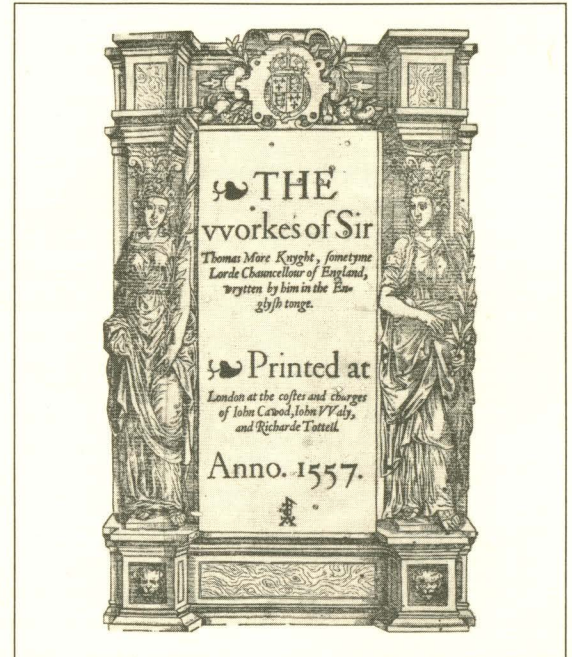
Since its publication, Shakespeare's folio has enjoyed the wide recognition it deserves. More's folio, in contrast, has been sorely neglected. Although More's *Utopia* has enjoyed as much public acclaim as some of Shakespeare's plays, More's folio has been largely ignored. Prior to the reprinting of the *English Works*, edited by W. E. Campbell in 1931, 370 years passed before More's English writings were available in a modern edition. The gravity of this neglect can perhaps best be appreciated when one reads the "History of the English Language" in the Introduction to Dr. Johnson's celebrated *Dictionary*. Johnson devotes seven folio pages (about one quarter of the whole) to illustrative quotations from More's *English Works* and explains why: "it was necessary to give a larger specimen of More's work because our language was then in a great degree formed and settled, and because it appears from Ben Jonson that his works were considered as models of pure elegance and style." Fortunately the long neglect of More's writings has been rectified in our time. The Yale University Press in 1958 began publishing the complete works of

More, both his English and Latin works, in 16 volumes, a project now near completion.

These two treasures of English literature are also significant because of their similar fortuitous publications, owing to the heroic devotion of their followers. In Shakespeare's case we have his friends and fellow actors, John Heminge and Henry Condell to thank. If they had not undertaken the labor of love and the financially risky enterprise of collecting, editing and printing his works, we would be without 18 of his plays, among them *MacBeth* and *Julius Caesar*. Likewise, if Thomas More's nephew, William Rastell, had not preserved his uncle's writings while living in exile in Belgium after More's execution, we would be without most of More's English writings.

On May 6 at the Caxton Friday luncheon, I will tell the story of my relationship with these two folios, especially More's, and exhibit my copy, one of 150 now extant. This book has both sentimental and scholarly interest for me, because I wrote my Ph.D. dissertation at Loyola on Thomas More, specifically the influence of Plato's *Republic* on the *Utopia*.

At that time my dissertation advisor, Father Edward Surtz, who edited the Yale edition of the *Utopia* and who has written numerous books and articles on More and his circle, brought alive for me the extraordinary life and works of Thomas More. Thomas More was a complex man, loved and honored by his family and friends, respected as the foremost scholar in England by Erasmus and a coterie of humanists in Europe, reviled by John Foxe in his *Acts and Monuments*, and by other Protestant



reformers, and harassed as Lord Chancellor of England -- a man who found time to publish over one million words in his lifetime. He has the unique distinction of being canonized a saint in the Roman Catholic Church in this century, while being heralded as a prophet of the new Socialist ideal state by communists in and out of the former Soviet Union. More was truly a Renaissance man, and, as Robert Bolt's play so movingly portrays, "A Man For All Seasons."

The passing of Father Surtz, who died prematurely in a bicycle accident 21 years ago, was a grievous loss for Renaissance scholarship. Under his wise and gentle direction, I spent most of my days in The Newberry Library, working on my dissertation. It was there that I discovered the 1557 edition of More's *English Works*. I can recall the awed reverence with which I turned the pages of that mammoth, 1491-page folio edition. I will have more to say about it, and about its editor, William Rastell, in the next issue of the *Caxtonian*.

Ed Quattrocchi

# Caxtonian

The Caxton Club of Chicago  
Founded 1895



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## First Fridays Program

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**Publisher** - Robert Cotner

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# Musings...

You probably heard the old fundraising story about the guy who complained, "Why are you coming to me for money?" and the astute fundraiser replied, "You don't think I'm interested in your ideas, do you?"

But you probably did not hear the one about the development director who was making a first-time call on a wealthy prospect in the western suburbs, and the development director noticed a fine gun collection in a case in the prospect's den. "What do you use these guns for?" the development man asked. "To shoot development directors," the prospect replied without a smile.

I share these stories because I've been traveling the countryside the past two months giving talks on philanthropy. I was in Des Moines in February, where I spoke to a statewide group. I was in Boston and LA in March, and this month, I was in Washington, DC. So I've been thinking and talking a great deal about fundraising and all that that means to organizations and people.

Fundraising begins, I always say, with friend-raising. It is, at heart, teaching folks that our history is the future of others: It is writing a new reality in bold relief delineating hope for tomorrow and framing a personal belief that the investment will be good, lasting, and worthwhile for the donor and for the largest possible circle of persons we can imagine.

That's why university people know that old graduates never die—they just turn into new dormitories. We in development have discovered that it is the unfinished business of human life that best fires the imagination of people who can and wish to donate to the greater cause of the organization.

As we enter the final months before the centennial of The Caxton Club, it is not inappropriate to write these things to the membership. We have a splendid heritage as Chicago's premier organization dedicated to the book in society. We have a centennial program of events, programs and publications that will make us all very proud of The Caxton Club. Our founders would, I believe, be pleased with what has been done; our successors will write of it, as I now do, with gratitude.

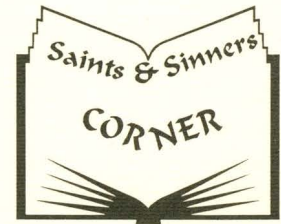
What we struggle with is the underwriting of the centennial. I'm reminded of the story about Booker T. Washington, when asked about donations of "tainted money" to Tuskegee Institute. "Only one problem with tainted money," the wise old man said: "T ain't enough!"

I remind you that giving to a worthy cause is both a privilege and a duty to those capable of responding. I extend a special invitation—a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, in fact—to Caxtonians to contribute funds to the centennial of our organization. Your gifts are tax deductible; the cause is most worthy: A testament to our past, a faith in our future, a pledge to these very special days of celebration.

Robert Cotner  
President

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## Adventures in Bibliomania: A Continuing Saga



We are told upon good authority that the noted bibliophile Francis Peale was seen browsing recently among the dusty books in The Saints and Sinners Corner of The DOFOBS World, a secluded west side bookstall. One volume caught his eye. He inched it gently from the shelf with trembling fingers. Could it be? Alas, it wasn't. It was only a pirated reprint of the Klaxon Club publication he sought, George H. Derby's *Phoenixiana*. The sham, published by the Grabhorn Press in 1937, was merely a reissue of the 1897 Klaxon publication, in one volume rather than two, and on cheap paper to boot.

Peale, who lusted for the original *Phoenixiana* to complete his collection of Klaxon Club gems, fumed at the shameful piracy and summoned the proprietor, Sir Thomas Joist. "How can you conceivably place such a cheap re-

print on your shelf? When I phoned, you said you could supply me with what I wanted. I want the Klaxon Club edition! Where is it?"

Sir Thomas, taken aback, mumbled a rejoinder. "The original is hard to find and very expensive. I saw a copy in a catalogue once, but I can't find the catalogue. I thought you might settle for the reprint." Peale would have none of this, however, and berated Sir Thomas as he stomped out into the blustery Chicago snow, "Give me a call if you ever find the real thing. You've got my number, if you can find it on that mess you call your desk."

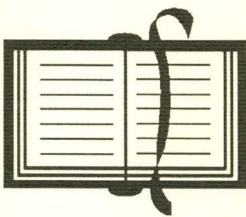
*Editor's Note: This is the first in a you-would-not-believe-how-many series by the irrepres- sible Franklyn H. Legg.*

**Worth Reading...** "Far & Wide," in the January 1994 issue of *Bookways*, contains an excellent interview by Caxtonian R. Russell Maylone with fellow Caxtonian Amos Paul Kennedy about his work as printer at Jubilee Press and as a consummate humanitarian in the cause of American children. Definitely worth reading!

**Voice Your Opinion...** David DeWoskin is conducting a survey in the Chicago metropolitan area on the topic of audio books. He invites any Caxton Club member who wishes to be interviewed (a 15-minute process, he says) to call him at 312/277-1072 to make arrangements.

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## The Caxton Chronicles



Caxtonians are fortunate to meet and dine in the splendid ambiance of the Mid-Day Club. The Caxton

Club has called many other locations its home in the past 99 years.

The founding fathers moved energetically to build the membership during the Club's first year, and by November 1895 they had rented three rooms in the University Club at 116 Dearborn Street. These rooms were furnished sumptuously and provided space for exhibits and a club library.

After only a year in these quarters, however, the Council decided to reduce expenditures for rent and to divert the savings to the publication of books. The Club abandoned its rooms and moved to a room in the Art Institute. This arrange-

ment proved unsatisfactory, and in November 1898 The Caxton Club leased two rooms in the Fine Arts Building on Michigan Avenue, beginning a 14-year golden period in its history.

By this move, the Club located itself in the center of Chicago's burgeoning arts and crafts movement. Artists, sculptors, musicians, architects, and writers occupied the studios and offices in the building. Francis Browne operated a bookstore designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. In the prestigious 10th floor, Ralph Clarkson painted and played host on Friday afternoons to The Little Room, Lorado Taft sculpted, John T. McCutcheon drew cartoons, and The Caxton Club occupied rooms next to the Chicago Literary Club. Ralph Fletcher Seymour, who had a studio in the building, served as curator for the Club for many years.

The Club's golden period came to a close as World War I approached. Membership and attendance declined, bringing a financial pinch. Consequently in 1918, the Club abandoned its rooms and returned to the Art Institute, where it continued to meet with a diminished membership for the next six years.

In September 1924, the Club left the Art Institute and moved into its own club rooms for the third time. These quarters were cramped, but private. The Club limped through the early years of the Great Depression in the Wrigley Building, but financial problems finally forced the Club to abandon its own rooms permanently in 1933.

During the next 30 years, the Club would meet in a variety of locations, finally settling at the Mid-Day Club in 1964 -- where we remain to this day.

*Frank J. Piehl*

# Book Marks

## Luncheon Programs

All meetings, unless otherwise noted, are held in the Mid-Day Club, 56th floor of the First National Bank of Chicago, Madison & Clark, Chicago. Luncheon and discussion, 12:30pm.

### April 8. (2nd Friday due to Good Friday)

Caxtonian Glen N. Wiche will discuss, with slides, the life and work of George J. Macy, 1900-1956, founder of The Limited Editions Club.

### May 6.

The final luncheon meeting before the summer break features Ed Quattrocchi on Thomas More's 1557 folio.

*Ed Quattrocchi  
Leonard Freedman*

## Welcome New Members

Following are new club members and the persons responsible for their membership.

Norma Rubovits  
Nominated by Mary Beth Beal  
Seconded by Bruce W. Hubbard

Toni Harkness  
Nominated by James Wells  
Seconded by Mary Ann McFarlane

Kim Coventry  
Nominated by Susan F. Rossen  
Seconded by Robert Cotner

*Charles Miner*

## Dinner Programs

All meetings, unless otherwise noted, are held in the Mid-Day Club, 56th floor of the First National Bank of Chicago, Madison & Clark, Chicago. Spirits-5pm; Dinner-6pm; Lecture-7pm

### April 20.

Larry Thompson. "The Margaret Landon Nobody Knows: The Hidden History Behind the Book Which Became *The King and I*."

### May 18.

Ruth Hutchison. "Hunting the Elusive Woolfs, and Other Literary Quests, or, Fifty Years of Selling Rare Books, Notes Toward a Biographical Study of Frances Hamill and Margery Barker."

*Tom Joyce*

## A Note of Passing -- A Memorial for James F. Hayes

James F. Hayes -- known to his friends and fellow Caxtonians as Jim -- died in Woodland Park, Colorado, on December 27, 1993. He had retired there from Chicago 22 years ago. Jim was an internationally known calligrapher, whose work had been reproduced in many anthologies. He was one of the few Americans to make a living through his writing and lettering, generally one-of-a-kind. Except for bookplates, he rarely designed for reproduction. He studied under Ernst Detterer at the School of the Art

Institute and later became a leading member of Detterer's Calligraphy Study Group at The Newberry Library. When Detterer died in 1947, he took over the group. Jim joined The Caxton Club in 1952. He was made an Honorary Member in recognition both of his distinguished career and of his longtime service to the Club; for many years he lettered, without charge, the signature pages tipped into books presented to our speakers. Those who knew him, miss him. Our condolences to his family.

*James Wells*

*Reservations for luncheon programs are requested. Reservations for dinner programs are required. Please make them by calling 312/943-9090, ext. 204, no later than 24 hours prior to the event.*

*The First National Bank of Chicago's parking garage, 40 South Clark Street, offers a special parking rate after 5pm to guests of the Mid-Day Club. When you leave, please tell the parking attendant you were at the Mid-Day Club and your parking fee will be \$7, or \$5 if validated at meeting..*



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60 West Walton Street  
Chicago, IL 60610