



Caxtonian

A Newsletter of The Caxton Club of Chicago

Volume II, No. 7

July 1994

CAXTON COUNCIL COMPLETES IMPRESSIVE YEAR OF BUSINESS

The 1993-94 Council of The Caxton Club completed its work, May 18, 1994. Having met in six regular and two special sessions during the year, the Council marked several significant, even historic, achievements for the year.

Most important, according to President Robert Cotner, was the rewriting and ratification of a new Constitution & By-Laws for the club, under the leadership of Eugene Hotchkiss III. This document, which moved through six drafts before ratification on April 18, 1994, provides a completely accurate governing document as the club moves into its second century.

In addition, the various committees continued their fine work in preparation for the club's centennial celebration, beginning in January 1995. Under the direction of Karen Skubish and Frank O. Williams, the Centennial Committee has had a demanding

schedule to bring about a fitting observance of the centennial.

Hayward Blake and Thomas Joyce have created an excellent new club *Directory*, which was circulated to members in May 1994.

The new Constitution & By-Laws provide three new officers, which the Council and President filled at year's end. These include: Secretary - Karen Skubish; Historian - Frank Piehl; and Archivist - Brother Michael Grace. Harry Stern was appointed as Chair of the Audit Committee, which will prepare and present a complete audit of the club's books by the September meeting, and the Council approved funds for the first complete audit since 1986.

Members of the Class of 1994, departing as Council members, include Paul F. Gehl, Jeanne Goessling, William D.

Minter, Stuart J. Murphy, and Sem C. Sutter. Rabbi Howard Berman, Class of 1995, retired from the Council because of his work schedule.

Robert Brooks, Chair of the Nominating Committee, composed of Mr. Joyce, Ms. Skubish, and Mr. Cotner, nominated and the Council approved the following slate for the Class of 1997: Brother Michael Grace, Edward Quattrocchi, Florence Shay, Glen N. Wiche, and Robert Williams. Celia Hilliard was selected to replace Rabbi Berman.

"I am delighted with the commitment of this Council and its open and keen discussions regarding matters of The Caxton Club," Cotner commented. "It is a pleasure working with the people on concerns so important, so unique, in this city," he added.

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Caxton Club Council in special session, April 20, 1994, to vote on new Constitution & By-Laws. From left, around the table: Karen Skubish, Charles Miner, Alice Schreyer, Robert Cotner, Frank Piehl, Charles Murphy, William Minter, Hayward Blake, Jeanne Goessling, Thomas Joyce, Gretchen Lagana, and Harry Stern.

Caxtonian

The Caxton Club of Chicago
Founded 1895



President - Robert Cotner

Vice-President - Thomas J. Joyce

Secy-Treasurer - Charles L. Miner

Past President - Hayward L. Blake

Council

Class of '94

Paul F. Gehl
Jeanne Goessling
William D. Minter
Stuart J. Murphy
Sem C. Sutter

Class of '95

Howard A. Berman
Bruce W. Hubbard
Susan F. Rossen
Alice D. Schreyer
Harry L. Stern

Class of '96

Robert L. Brooks
Eugene Hotchkiss III
Gretchen L. Lagana
Kathleen Lamb
Frank J. Piehl

First Fridays Program

Chairman - Ed Quattrocchi

Co-Chairman - Leonard Freedman

Secy - Bookkeeper - Jane Smith



Newsletter Staff

Publisher - Robert Cotner

Editor - Michael Braver

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Fine Printers & Lithographers

Musings...

I first met Harold E. "Fritz" Whitehall in the coffeehouse days of 1960 at a reading he gave at Indiana University, where he was Professor of English and Chairman of Linguistics and I, Wall Street Journal Fellow in journalism. He read that evening, to jazz, his splendid renditions of *The Song of Solomon* and "The Lake Island of Innisfree."

Four years later, I heard him "perform" at the National Council of Teachers of English meeting in Cleveland, where he was the final "act" in a three-person seminar. The first speaker was unprepared; the second, esoteric beyond reason; Dr. Whitehall stole the show with a verve that was his hallmark.

Before going to the University of Liberia as Fulbright Lecturer in English in 1971, I learned Dr. Whitehall was British Counsel Professor of English there and was, according to my predecessor, the one "shining light" at the university. He indeed was that, and during my year's tenure there, we became dear friends.

A polymath, conversant in more than 20 languages, he held kudos filling nearly seven single-spaced, legal pages. But lying just below the surface of his life was the presence of a tragedy, as constant a companion as his thermos of "tea." He related this brief story only once to me in one of our daily conversations: His first wife, an American literature scholar and a true soul-mate, was killed in an auto accident in 1941—"and I've never recovered fully from that loss," he told me in his English way, with profound sadness. Though married again, he lived, I sensed, in haunting loneliness. I found myself his brief solace—a reminder perhaps of Indiana, of America, of past happiness.

His brilliance was best demonstrated at a convocation in 1972, when, at the request of the students, Fritz was asked to present a program on Shakespeare. He wanted me on the platform with him, and I sat looking across the audience of African faces responding in delight as he gave them an hour of Shakespeare's sonnets from memory, commenting briefly on each. The students stood applauding when he finished. "I muffed only one line," he said with a smile as we walked off the platform to mingle with gathering students.

A few hours before our midnight flight from Monrovia, June 30, 1972, the university gave a party for departing professors, and Fritz was there to bid us farewell. A diminutive man, he reached up and placed both his hands around my neck, drew my face next to his, kissed me, and whispered, "I shall miss you greatly." That was the last time I saw him, the last time I heard his lovely, lilting English. But I keep at my desk a 1960 *Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language*, for which Fritz was Etymological Editor and for which, he told me one day, he had responsibilities of General Editor as well. This book is my daily reminder of a brilliant human being, whom I loved as friend and yet revere as scholar.

Robert Cotner
President

Two Poems by Harold E. Whitehall

William Longland (or Langland)
(circa 1560 A. D.)

A mound of grain, green-gold, lies there, flung up,
Winnowed from husks fit forage for a bin.
The hands are there, much wider than a scoop,
And by the hands a sack as wide as sin.
The long land has no horizon but mist,
No heights but what I stand on, and its span
Hangs from the heavens as hand hangs from the wrist.
The place is Malvern Hills; myself, the man.
Night-long I slave to fill the sack with grain
And make it safe a lintel-length from care.
The wet wind thrumming wild on loft and lea:
"Not by the handful shall man take his share
Of grief, but by the ear, would he remain
Piers Plowman." Strange such dreams should come to me!

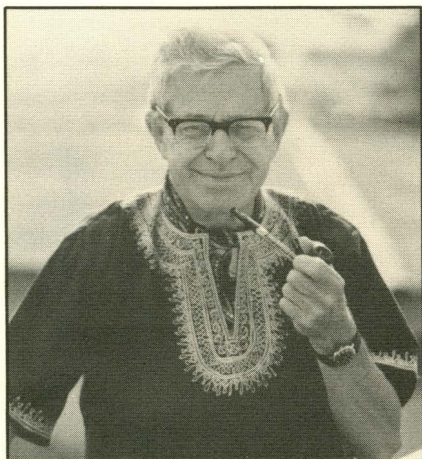
Anne Bolleyn (or Bullen)
(circa 1520 A. D.)

Thomas, by all good gods and my good grief,
I vow myself yours only. In which wise
yourself, yourself, are grateful to my eyes,
your puissant parts alluring past belief
of poor souls clouded with unknowingness. In brief
I love you—not in selfishness of sighs,
facility of flattery or of lies,
but woman-like, sans sense and sans relief.
And since this fashion of love is at long length
lost to our Windsor world, since sneer or laugh
could snare us now and then, or here and there,
this be our epigraph, or epitaph:
"These were the strangest lovers anywhere,
yet in their very strangeness lay their strength."

Editor's note: From "Enigma Variations," written at the University of Ibadan, West Africa, in 1970. Dr. Whitehall explained: "I attempted to project myself into the minds and emotions of 27 personages, . . . at crucial occasions of their lives. . . . those personages are masks I assumed to express—with proper aesthetic distance from sentiments about sentiments—my emotions and states of mind at various crucial occasions in my own life."

Harold E. 'Fritz' Whitehall — A 20th Century Dr. Johnson, Sans Boswell

Harold E. Whitehall was born in Ramsbottom, Lancashire, England, May 14, 1905. After degrees from London University in 1924 and 1927, he came to the University of Iowa, where he took the Ph. D. degree in 1931, with a dissertation, "The Language of the Shuttleworth Accounts," parts of which were published in *Philological Quarterly* in 1932 and 1933.



Following brief teaching and research stints at Iowa, University of Wisconsin, and University of Michigan, he went to Indiana University in 1940, where he taught until 1966. He later held two British Counsel Professorships in West Africa, at the University of Ibadan (Nigeria) and the University of Liberia before returning to London in retirement.

He was author of an excellent text, *Structural Essentials of English* (Harcourt-Brace, 1956), scores of scholarly articles, more than two dozen poems, plays, radio dramas, and television programs. His translations, include work in Erse, French, German, Spanish, Chinese, Arabic, Gaelic, and other languages.

His lexicographical works included editorship of *Webster's Imperial Dictionary of the English Language* (1945), *Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language* (1951), and *Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language, Collegiate Edition* (1953-61).

One day, while teaching colleagues at the University of Liberia, 1971-72, Whitehall handed Caxton President Robert Cotner a small sheath of poems, some he had written, some translated, and told him, "Keep these for me." Two of these his poems are printed for the first time, as far as is known, in this month's *Caxtonian*.

Whitehall lived his final years at St. Marylebone Old Peoples Home, Newstead. He died on February 25, 1986.

Harold E. Whitehall at the University of Liberia, 1972. Photo by and from the collection of Robert Cotner

THE STATE OF THE CLUB: 1994, by Robert Cotner, President

Robert Frost once observed that the most natural movement in nature is the opening and closing of the hand, or on a larger scale, the opening and enclosing of the arms. With this movement, he said, we bring what is dear to us near and hold it for a time.

I have found that this aptly describes our monthly meetings in this place as members of The Caxton Club. We gather as book lovers regularly, to embrace one another—figuratively, if not literally—and important universal considerations integral to our culture and to western civilization. Having come together in a commonality of dining, fellowship, and enlightenment, we depart to better embrace privately our own special interests that are the appropriate diverse elements of a long and important heritage in our humanistic tradition.

We have had an added dimension to our association this year with the *Caxtonian*. What I hear from members and others is very positive; it has provided among us what books have given peoples for centuries: The presence, when away from one another, of a voice we recognize as speaking our language, as it were. We have come to know so much better through his monthly “Caxton Chronicles,” Frank Piehl. We have met in a new and rich way our good friend, Ed Quattrocchi (even if we haven’t yet learned how to pronounce or spell his name properly). We have seen the incisive mind of Tom Joyce filling in when called upon. And we have had opportunity to meet the irrepressible, though mysterious, Franklyn H. Legg, who has promised more of his humor.

Suffice it to say, the *Caxtonian* has brought vitality to our organization. This would not have been possible without the willing and generous contribution of two people I want to recognize. The editor of the *Caxtonian*,

Mike Braver, has produced every issue and all announcements without remuneration—a most generous gift of talent and time to the club. The printer of the *Caxtonian*, Dan Lang of River Street Press, Aurora, has printed every issue, free of charge to the Club—simply because I asked him and because he is a dear friend and a generous human being. We salute Mike and Dan for their superb contributions.

Many Caxtonians have been working very hard on behalf of the organization; I will not mention all by name at this time. We’ll take care of that through subsequent issues of the *Caxtonian*. I do want to mention Karen Skubish and Frank Williams, chairs of our Centennial Committee and their hardworking committee. I want to mention Frank Piehl, who has written the history of our club and worked ahead of schedule, pushing the editors and publishers—a rare occurrence, indeed.

Charles Miner, Tom Joyce, and Jane Smith deserve mentioning, for they have made certain the necessary details of the club were carried out well and in a timely fashion. Hayward Blake has given us a new *Directory*, the finest we’ve had, and he has, as well, represented us in the founding of the Fellowship of American Bibliophilic Societies. I thank again Eugene Hotchkiss and his committee for their excellent work in updating our Constitution and By-Laws.

I thank the staff of the Mid-Day Club, who monthly meet our needs in kind service and good food.

In my judgment, the health of The Caxton Club is excellent as we close 1993-94 and stand on the threshold of the Centennial, ready to launch with intelligence, grace, and vigor the second century of our club.

I am concerned at this moment regarding

the financing of the plans of the Centennial, and I urge members and others who can contribute to do so for this worthy, historical enterprise of our organization.

I am pleased to announce to you that Mayor Richard M. Daly has authorized a proclamation which will name 1995 as “The Year of the Book In Chicago,” in honor of our Centennial. We will use this theme in our activities throughout the city during the year.

It seems to me that you have every reason to be proud of The Caxton Club, of your Council, and of all who hold positions of leadership. I am personally deeply honored to have been selected as your president; it is one of the highlights of life to be thus associated with you and with The Caxton Club. I thank you.

As has been the custom this year, I would like to use a bit of literature to serve as a prelude to what we do this evening and as a conclusion to my report. I am going to be so bold as to use a verse of my own writing to close out the year. I’m not certain the world is ready for this, but you are a captive audience, and this verse captures rather well, I believe, our time together thus far.

*Living outside of time these days,
where light and darkness commingle,
we are as fireflies, whose ways
startle imagination one spring night
with a phosphorescent declaration
that is neither wrong nor right,
but only momentarily lovely,
signification being testament
to shadow between segmented brilliance
in cosmic cycles of firmament—
spring, summer, fall, winter—
mingling on a given day each year
in rhythms we neither know nor fear.*

Chicago, Illinois
May 18, 1994

Caxtonian Bruce Beck Honored by American Center for Design

Bruce Beck received the Robert Hunter Middleton Award of the American Center for Design, at its annual meeting, June 13, 1994, for his 50 years of work within the organization as teacher, mentor, and friend.

The award, named after Caxtonian Robert Hunter Middleton, was created ten years ago to honor Mr. Middleton, founder of the Society of Typographic Arts and major influence in design and fine printing. It is presented to those rare individuals who have spent a lifetime in the fulfillment of their art and craft, who have pursued excellence in visual communication, and who, by their example, have influenced their peers and thus raised the standards of the profession.

Beck, past president and Fellow of ACD, epitomizes the essence of this award. He was a friend and student of

Middleton and has carried on the precepts and historical teachings passed on from Ray DaBoll, Fred Goudy, Victor Hammer, and Bruce Rogers. Among Beck's many accomplishments, two stand foremost for Caxtonians: as co-author and designer of *Robert Hunter Middleton: The Man and His Letters* (1985), and as designer for *Celebrating a Century of the Book in Chicago: The Caxton Club, 1895-1995*, by Frank Piehl, the centennial history of our organization now in progress.

Past recipients of this prestigious award have been Josef Muller-Brockman, Swiss typographer and teacher; Paul Standard, calligrapher, teacher, and author; Jack Werner-Stauffacher, erudite typographer, designer, and teacher; and Hermann Zapf, calligrapher, typographer, and teacher.

Sharing the honor with Bruce Beck were

Bruce Beck (r) receives the ACD award from fellow Caxtonian Hayward Blake.

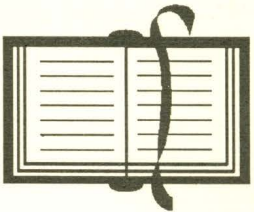
wife Margaret (and frequent dinner guest at Caxton meetings), son Steve, daughter Barbara, and her husband Dennis, as well as award designer, friend of Beck, and former partner, Rick Valicenti.

All Caxtonians are honored by Bruce Beck's honor, and we extend a hearty congratulations to him.

Hayward Blake



The Caxton Chronicles



What is the origin of The Caxton Club's dedication to the tradition of fine printing? Al-

though the archives do not specify exactly, an examination of the interests of the founding fathers reveals the answer. All were either book collectors or professionals from the book world. Three -- George A. Armour, George S. Payson, and W. Irving Way -- were active members of the Grolier Club, founded in New York in 1884. The Caxton Club was patterned after this club, and the same objectives were adopted, word for word.

A contemporary account of the Grolier Club was given by Brander Matthews in 1896 in his book, *Bookbinding, Old and New*, subtitled, *Notes of a Book-Lover, with an Account of the Grolier Club*. He

wrote: "The Grolier Club is a gathering of those who love books for their external beauty -- for the choice of the quality of paper, for the graceful firmness of the type, for the even clearness of the presswork, for the harmonious elegance of the illustrations, and for the decorative skill bestowed on the binding . . . The Grolier Club is interested in books not as literature but as works of art. It is with the art and mystery of the book-maker, the printer, the engraver, and the binder, and not with the secrets of authorship, that the members of the Grolier Club concern themselves, although many of them are scholars and students of literature. They are true book-lovers, and not book-hoarders; they are bibliophiles, not bibliomaniacs; they love a book for its intrinsic beauty, not for its accidental rarity."

A study of the list of publications of The

Caxton Club reveals that the founding fathers not only followed this ethic, but they also chose works of substance for publication. The 60 books comprise an impressive bibliography, commensurate with the original dedication to fine printing.

As the years passed, however, many changes took place in the world of commercial publishing, impacting on the publication policy of The Caxton Club. The committee that revised the Constitution & By-Laws of the Club in 1994 debated long and hard about the present objectives of the Club. The committee confirmed a dedication "to promote the arts pertaining to books, and to foster their appreciation." As the members of The Caxton Club celebrate its 100th anniversary, we will define in new detail a viable publication policy for the next 100 years.

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.

May marked our final luncheon for this program year. We will resume our First Friday Luncheons in September. Thank you all for your attendance and support.

Ed Quattrocchi
Leonard Freedman

Annual Meeting Held in May

In keeping with the new Constitution & By-Laws of The Caxton Club, the organization held its first official Annual Meeting in many years, on May 18, 1994, during the regular evening dinner meeting.

The 20-minute program included the following items:

Financial Report - Charles Miner
Summary of New Constitution - Eugene Hotchkiss III
Recognition of Council - Robert Cotner
Introduction of New Officers - Mr. Cotner
Voting on Class of 1997 - Robert Brooks
"State of the Club: 1994" - Mr. Cotner

The "State of the Club: 1994" is published in this month's Caxtonian.

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

August 17.

Jack Bales. "The Enigma of Kenneth Roberts, Interpreter of the American Revolution."

Tom Joyce

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.

Caxtonian John C. Holden Dies

The Reverend John C. Holden, Caxtonian since 1986 and head of the West Side medical center ministry that bridged the gap between religion and medicine, died on May 22, 1994, in Naperville. Founder of the Institute of Religion and Medicine, he worked to help society deal with the ethical, legal, and economic issues resulting from advances in biomedical science.

We extend our sympathy to his wife Isabella and his family.



THE CAXTON CLUB



The Caxton Club of Chicago
60 West Walton Street
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