



Caxtonian

A Newsletter of The Caxton Club of Chicago

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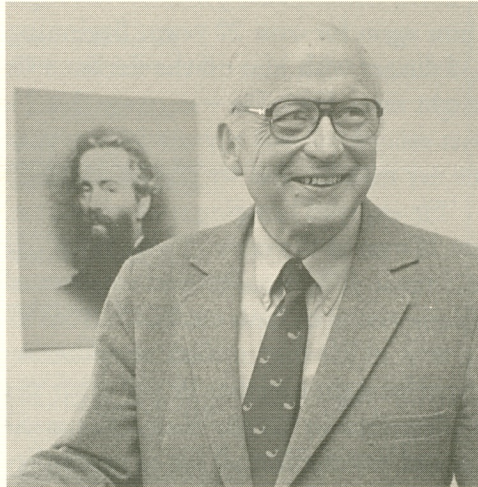
Scholar Sees UnMerry Christmas in Herman Melville's Vision

"Merry Christmas": Herman Melville assigned that age-old phrase as the title of Chapter 22 in *Moby Dick*. But Melville, much as he revered Jesus, was never the good, conventional Christian his pious mother longed for him to be. He loved feasts and flowing boards of the kind usually associated with the phrase "Merry Christmas."

But this chapter title, like most of the few invocations of the phrase found scattered here and there in Melville's writings, carried a sad, even a bitter, irony turning on contrasts between the true spirit of the highest religious ideals and the social realities of the actual world.

Christmas is the sailing-day of the *Pequod* — the name, says Ishmael, for a "celebrated tribe...now extinct as the ancient Medes" — it then being supposed that the whole tribe had been exterminated as devils by the Puritans. This day was "a short, cold Christmas." As the *Pequod* got under way, one of her old Quaker owners, sanctimonious Captain Bildad, sang "at intervals what seemed a dismal stave of psalmody to cheer the hands at the windlass, who roared forth some sort of chorus about the girls in Booble Alley."

A second old Quaker owner, Captain Peleg, "ripped and swore" at the crew "in the most frightful manner...using his leg very freely" on them, dealing Ishmael's first kick. Meanwhile, the third old Quaker, "ungodly, godlike" Captain Ahab, sat unseen and unheard in his cabin, brooding on his secret, mad purpose for the *Pequod's* voyage: his vengeance on the Great White



The names Hayford and Melville are linked for years to come in the 15-volume edition of The Writings of Herman Melville that Harrison Hayford has worked on since 1965. With 13 of the 15 volumes completed in a cooperative effort between Northwestern University Press and the Newberry Library, Hayford continues his monumental labor. In this issue of the Caxtonian we link the physiognomies of Melville and Hayford (he is wearing the Moby-Dick necktie) in a 1982 photograph by Kathy Richland.

Whale that has unlimbed (and unsexed) him. Ahab sees Moby Dick as the agent of an evil, unloving Power — perhaps even the Old Testament Jehovah — who presides over non-benevolent Nature wherein humankind and animals alike are mangled. The scene is not that of a Merry Christmas at all.

In any case, by New England Quakers and Puritans, such as Melville's paternal Scottish forbearers, Christmas was not

celebrated as the prime winter-solstice holiday it had become in Merrie England; they opposed its celebration as just another superstitious, folk-corruption of true Christianity. New Year's Day was their favored time for celebrations and gifts.

But from his mother's Hudson-River-Valley Dutch family, Melville inherited the folk traditions of a different sort of Merry Christmas. He memorialized them, wistfully, yet with ironies, in three of his late and now little-known poems, written sometime between 1840 and 1890.

The first of these, "Shadow at the Feast," is dated 1847 and tells the story of a family Christmas feast made sad by the presence of a kinswoman who was a "Child-bride of May-time, Child-widow in June." The second, "Stockings in the Farm-House Chimney," comes from the 1850s. A short poem, it seems to refer to Christmas at Arrowhead, Melville's own farm in Pittsfield, MA, when his four children were little. The third poem, "A Dutch Christmas Up the Hudson in the Time of Patroons," appears inside this issue of the *Caxtonian*.

All of these poems are hard to come by and are now found only in out-of-print volumes. They will be reprinted in the forthcoming final two volumes of the Northwestern-Newberry edition of *The Writings of Herman Melville*.

*Very Sincerely Yours
Harrison Hayford*

Harrison Hayford

Caxtonian

The Caxton Club
Founded 1895



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Musings...

I have thought hard about how to close out our centennial year, "The Year of the Book in Chicago." The most appropriate way, it seems to me, is to tell a brief story of my long association with David Elton Trueblood, Quaker theologian and author, who died at the age of 94 last year in Landsdale, PA.

I first met Dr. Trueblood in 1956, when I was a second-year biology major with a keen, encompassing interest in religion, philosophy, and literature. I did not meet him again for over 20 years. Beginning in 1977, I saw him regularly and occasionally had dinner with him on the Earlham College campus, Richmond, IN, where he had taught since 1946. He was aware that I loved writing, and he knew that his brief, compact essay-form was my model, my concentration. In short, during this time, he became my mentor, and we communicated often by letter, telephone, and in person.

He enjoyed bringing students and scholars to the Earlham campus for formal dinners. We sat at the table in wondrous conversation during which we shared his splendid sense of humor, his vast intellectual range, and his deep spiritual sensibilities. His unique vision of faith emanated from his long, steady devotion to Quakerism and from a view of life that unified world history and a simple kindness as I have never seen them brought together in any other person. His vision was a tri-part commitment that he described in his autobiography as the "inner life of devotion, the outer life of service, and the intellectual life of rationality." (See bibliography, opposite page.)

In 1984, a few months before I came to Aurora University, he wrote his Quaker friends in Kankakee that I was moving to Aurora. These people, part of the Acorn Yokefellow Center in Yorkville, invited me into their circle upon arrival. Because Trueblood was in his 80s and would not be traveling much more, I suggested that we invite him to present a lecture at the university and a seminar at the Acorn Center. It was agreed upon.

I extended the invitation, and he came to Aurora on April 27, 1987, for presentations that were to be his final public appearances away from Earlham before retiring to Landsdale in 1988. In preparation for his talk at the university, I arranged the benches in Quaker-fashion around the interior of the chapel. Trueblood always sat on a facing bench surrounded by participants.

At such meetings, he never tired of telling of a Quaker group whose ship, the *Woodhouse*, docked for repairs in England in the late 1600s. While docked, the Quakers took their message of peace into the community. The ship's captain Robert Fowler wrote of them in the ship's log, "They gathered sticks, kindled a fire, and left it burning." This luminous sentence is an fitting benediction, I believe, for the Caxton centennial year, which we conclude with gratitude to all who shared our message throughout the Chicago community and beyond.

Robert Cotner
Editor

Tribune Article Memorializes the Late Quaker Teacher Dr. Trueblood

[Excerpted with permission from the Chicago Tribune, May 1, 1987.]

D. Elton Trueblood, elder statesman of Quakerism in the United States, says he has done “70 years of hard thinking” in his life. He has spent nearly as much time passing those thoughts on to students at colleges and universities.

And even though officially he is retired, Trueblood, 86, still thinks hard and has a knack for teaching.

This week students, administrators, and

visitors at Aurora University got the benefit of his wisdom. In a wide-ranging lecture, the Quaker leader criticized the current state of higher education, repeating a theme he stated 40 years ago, and complained that too few people have any appreciation of great literature.

“If my coming here and using my energy, which isn’t as abundant as it was, makes you enlarge your own vision, then of course my effort is clearly justified,” he said. “How can you make your life larger? The greatest way it by the use of the written word.”

Trueblood’s life has revolved around the written word. He has written 36 books on a variety of topics, including logic and philosophy, lay ministry, the humor of Christ and the theology of Abraham Lincoln. Among his best-known books are *The People Called Quakers*, *The Philosophy of Religion*, and his 1974 autobiography, *While It Is Day*.

Trueblood also wrote *The Yoke of Christ*; from it developed the Yokefellows, an international non-denominational organization based on commitment and discipline. The group operates retreats across the country.

He lives in Richmond, IN, where he is professor-at-large at Earlham College, a small Quaker school. He was born into a seventh-generation Quaker family in Iowa and was attracted early to the intellectual life.

“Quakers” is the popular name given to the Religious Society of Friends. Quakerism developed in England in the 1600s, and most of its followers now live in the United States. The Quakers have been known for their belief in pacifism and racial equality and for stressing education....

In his critique of higher education, Trueblood reminisced about his student days at Harvard University, where he was required to write an essay every week for his tutors, who then criticized it.

“That’s a first-class education — one-on-one — of which there is very little in the modern world,” he said. “We’ve got a lot of shoddy education going on. I know plenty of students who have never met one of their professors. You can easily get through college and not have one big idea....”

The philosopher said too many people ignore the works of Cicero, Socrates, Pascal, and others whose thought was the cornerstone of his education.

“How sad it makes me feel that millions of people have never read one word” by the great thinkers, he said. “They could any time, but they fill their minds with that awful trash in the daily newspapers...most of it worth absolutely nothing. You wouldn’t be any worse off if you didn’t read one word of it.

“Look how stupid we are,” he said. “We go for the shallow and the temporary and miss the greatness....”

Chronology of Publications By David Elton Trueblood

- The Essence of Spiritual Religion*, 1936
- The Trustworthiness of Religious Experience*, 1939
- The Knowledge of God*, 1939
- The Logic of Belief*, 1942
- The Predicament of Modern Man*, 1944
- Dr. Johnson’s Prayers*, 1947
- Foundations for Reconstruction*, 1946
- Alternative to Futility*, 1948
- The Common Ventures of Life*, 1949
- Signs of Hope in a Century of Despair*, 1950
- The Life We Prize*, 1951
- Your Other Vocation*, 1952
- The Recovery of Family Life*, 1953
(with Pauline Trueblood)
- Declaration of Freedom*, 1955
- Philosophy of Religion*, 1957
- The Yoke of Christ*, 1958
- The Idea of a College*, 1959
- Confronting Christ*, 1960
- The Company of the Committed*, 1961
- General Philosophy*, 1964
- The Humor of Christ*, 1964
- The Lord’s Prayers*, 1965
- The People Called Quakers*, 1966
- The Incendiary Fellowship*, 1967
- Robert Barclay*, 1968
- A Place to Stand*, 1969
- The New Man for Our Time*, 1970
- The Future of the Christian*, 1971
- The Validity of the Christian Mission*, 1972
- Abraham Lincoln: Theologian of American Anguish*, 1973
- While It Is Day: An Autobiography*, 1974
- The Meditations of Elton Trueblood*, 1975
- The Encourager*, 1978
- The Teacher*, 1980
- Essays in Gratitude*, 1982



D. Elton Trueblood leads a seminar of scholars and professors in 1978, in Stout Meetinghouse on the campus of Earlham College, Richmond, IN. [Photo by and from the collection of Robert Cotner.]

Andrew Bagnato

New Members Continue to Enrich Caxton Rolls

The following persons have been accepted into The Caxton Club. We extend a hearty welcome to one and all.

Ralph Carrena

Nominated by Tom O'Gorman
Seconded by Karen Skubish

Laurel Church

Nominated by Robert Cotner
Seconded by Tom Joyce

Charles Feldstein

Nominated by Will White
Seconded by Karen Skubish

Ralph Fujimoto

Nominated by John Notz
Seconded by Tom Joyce

Donald Galen

Nominated by Roger Vree
Seconded by R. Eden Martin

Carol Grossman

Nominated by Paul Gehl
Seconded by Tom Joyce

Katherine Haskins

Nominated by Alice Schreyer
Seconded by Gwin Kolb

Ed Hirschland

Nominated by Kim Coventry
Seconded by Tom Joyce

Eugene Huffine

Nominated by Mary Ann McFarlane
Seconded by Evelyn Lampe

Donald Lindstrom

Nominated by Robert Cotner
Seconded by Tom Joyce

Peter O. Peretti

Nominated by Tom Joyce
Seconded by Karen Skubish

Michael Sawdey

Nominated by Robert Cotner
Seconded by Tom Joyce

Alyce K. Sigler

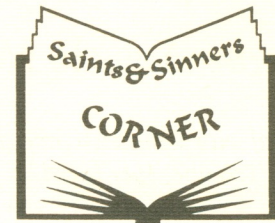
Nominated by Janis Notz
Seconded by Tom Joyce

Martin Starr

Nominated by Robert Williams
Seconded by William Drendel

Terry Tanner

Reinstatement letter by Karen Skubish

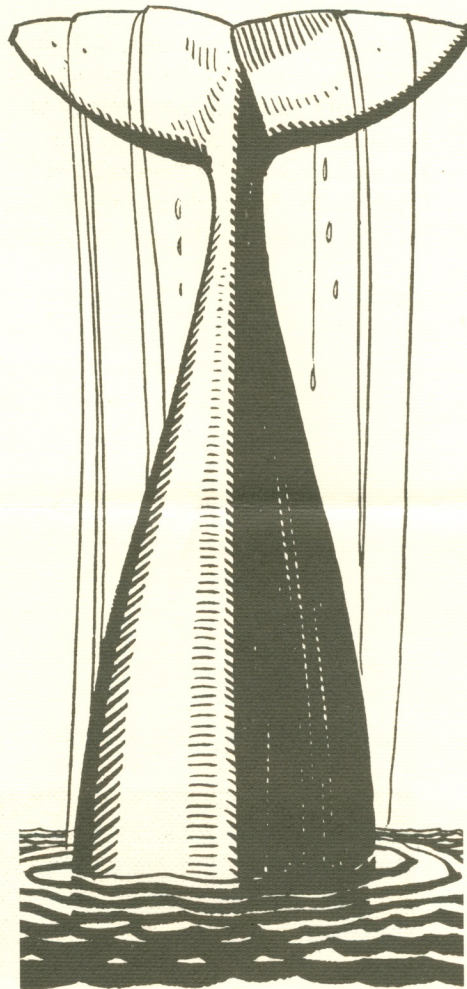


The Caxton history by Frank J. Piehl has been listed in the *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, Volume 89, No. 3, September 1995. The Bibliographical Society of America began in Chicago and is the chief organization for bibliographic studies in America. It is now located at the University of South Carolina.

The Family Album will issue a 144-page reference/sale catalog, *Tillers of the Cultural Soil*, to celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Aldine Press. It will be available to all collectors of early books and fine printing. Caxtonians desiring more information on this publication may call 717/235-2134.

Counter, the new publication of the University of Iowa Center for the Book, will publish a reprint of "The Art of Punchcutting" by the late Caxtonian Robert Hunter Middleton. This will appear in the third issue of *Counter* and will be accompanied by a contemporary commentary by Stan Nelson of the Smithsonian Institution, as well as a number of other articles on type, typography, and other graphic concerns. Caxtonians wishing to order this periodical may write to Kim Merker, Director, University Iowa Center for the Book, 366 English-Philosophy Building, Iowa City, IA 52242.

Caxtonians attending the January dinner meeting will receive as a keepsake a copy of Sotheby's elegant October 23, 1987 auction catalog, *Four Caxtons: Peter Schoeffer, The Nuremberg Chronicle, and Wynkyn de Worde*, which also contains three full-color plates and other splendid illustrative and descriptive materials.



Woodcut by Rockwell Kent in Melville's *Moby Dick*, 1930. Used with the permission of R. R. Donnelley & Sons Company.

*A Dutch Christmas Up the Hudson
In the Time of Patroons
by Herman Melville*

*Over the ruddy hearth, lo, the green bough!
In house of the sickle and home of the plough,
Arbored sit and toast apples now!*

*Hi, there in the barn! have done with the flail.
Worry not the wheat, nor winnow in the gale:
'Tis Christmas and holiday, turkey too and ale!*

*Creeping round the wainscot of old oak red,
The ground-pine, see — smell the sweet balsam shed!*

*Leave off, Katrina, to tarry there and scan:
The cream will take its time, girl, to rise in the pan.
Meanwhile here's a knocking, and the caller it is Van —
Tewis Van der Blumacher, your merry Christmas man.*

*Leafless the grove now where birds billed the kiss:
To-night when the fiddler wipes his forehead, I wis,
And panting from the dance come our Hans and Cousin Chris,
Yon bush in the window will never be amiss!*

*But oats have ye heaped, men, for horses in stall?
And for each heifer young and the old mother-mow?
Have ye raked down the hay from the aftermath-mow?
The Christmas let come to creatures one and all!*

*Though the pedlar, peering in, doubtless deemed it but folly,
The yoke-cattle's horns did I twine with green holly.
Good to breathe their sweet breath this blest Christmas morn,
Mindful of the ox, ass, and Babe new-born.*

*The snow drifts and drifts, and the frost it benumbs:
Elsie, pet, scatter to the snow-birds your crumbs.*

*Sleigh-bells a' jingle! 'Tis Santa Claus: Hail!
Villageward he goes through the spooming of the snows;
Yea, hurrying to round his many errands to a close,
A mince-pie he's taking to the one man in jail. —
What! drove right out between the gate-posts here?
Well, well, little Sharp-Eyes, blurred panes we must clear!*

*Our Santa Claus a clever way has, and a free:
Gifts from him some will take who would never take from me.
For poor hereabouts there are none: — none so poor
But that pudding for an alms they would spurn from the door.*

*All the same to all in the world's wide ways —
Happy harvest of the conscience on many Christmas Days.*

Yannella to Speak at Revels on 19th Century Editor

Caxtonian Donald Yannella, Distinguished Professor of American Literature at Barat College, will entertain Caxtonians and guests at the club's traditional Holiday Revels, scheduled for the Belmont Yacht Club, December 20.

Yannella will speak on "Evert A. Duyckinck: New York Litterateur and Collector." Duyckinck, a highly visible New Yorker, was at the center of a noted literary-intellectual circle. He was an editor, publisher, and writer, and is best remembered among historians as the author of the pioneering *Cyclopaedia of American Literature* and editor of the weekly *Literary World*. He was, as well, a friend of Herman Melville and Nathaniel Hawthorne and had connections with Edgar Allan Poe, Margaret Fuller, and other literary figures of the 19th Century.

His collection of some 18,000 volumes, left to the James Lenox Library, became part of one of three cornerstones for the New York Public Library a century ago. Yannella will concentrate on the collections, including the use of them by Duyckinck's contemporaries and subsequent scholars.

An active scholar, Yannella has written dozens of scholarly articles. His books include *American Prose to 1820*, *Ralph Waldo Emerson*, *The Perfect Prodigy: Melville on the Birth of Malcolm*; *Herman Melville's Malcolm Letter: "Man's Final Lore,"* and *New Essays on Billy Budd*.

Yannella moved to Chicago in 1991 well prepared in reference to its 20th Century history by conversations and correspondence with the city's native son, James T. Farrell, with whom he had a close friendship during the author's last years.

A Caxtonian since 1994, Yannella brings a vitality and wit to the club regularly, and Caxtonians will not want to miss his presentation at this year's Revels.

German National Eager for Caxton Membership

Darmstadt, Germany

Dear President,

Robert Cotner sent me [the September] *Caxtonian* Newsletter. Many thanks for the additional copies. What do I have to do to become a Caxtonian? How many letters of recommendation does your Membership Committee need to get the approval for a Non-Resident Member? Perhaps you may ask my friend Bruce Beck, who knows my work and also personally, to collect a few good words.

For my total dues I would send you a check.

Through your publications I know a lot of the activities of The Caxton Club, and I would like to support your goals in the future.

Greetings to you, to Bruce and Robert Cotner, and the other members of The Caxton Club.

Hermann Zapf

Book Marks

Luncheon Programs

All luncheon 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, 12:30 p.m.

December 15.

Caxtonian Peggy Sullivan has promised to entertain and inform Caxton colleagues with a program on Christmas and books. She will bring her rich background as librarian and bibliophile in a luncheon program no Caxtonian will want to miss.

January 12.

Caxtonian Bruce Beck will explain how the computer has affected the private press -- how the computer enters the letterpress operation. The computer is the future of private printing, he believes. He will illustrate his discussion with printed examples.

*Ed Quattrocchi
Leonard Freedman*

Important Note: Members planning to attend luncheons must make advance reservations by calling either the Caxton number, 312/255-3710, or Quattrocchi's number, 708/475-4653 Luncheon for members and guests, \$20.

Edgerton Photo Show Now at Library Center

Harold E. Edgerton (1903-1990), professor of engineering at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, was a specialist in high-speed photography. He was responsible for a number of inventions and technological improvements in photographic lighting, most notable of which was the development of the high-speed strobe light.

Using lights that permitted exposures as brief as one-millionth of a second, "Doc" Edgerton produced photographs of bullets in mid-flight, the action of a tennis pro's serve, a hummingbird's wings, and, most famously, the perfect cornet formed when a drop of milk splashes into a bowl of liquid.

"Seeing the Unseen: Photographs by Harold E. Edgerton," an exhibition of some of his most famous stop-action and strobe-light photographs, is on display in the Main Exhibition Hall, Lower Level, of the Harold Washington Library Center until December 20.

All programs at the Chicago Public Library are free. For information, telephone the Special Collections & Preservation Division, at 312/747-4740.

Dinner Programs

All dinner meetings, unless otherwise noted are held in the Mid-Day Club, 56th Floor of the First National Bank, Madison and Clark streets, Chicago. Spirits, 5 p.m., dinner, 6 p.m., lecture, 7 p.m.

December 20.

Caxtonian Donald Yannella will entertain at the club's Holiday Revels, scheduled at the Chicago Yacht Club, Belmont Harbor, Belmont Avenue and Lake Michigan. He will speak on "Evert A. Duyckinck: New York Litterateur and Collector." Caxton books and memorabilia will be available for purchase.

January 17.

Chicago Alderman Edward M. Burke (14th Ward) and his wife, the Honorable Anne M. Burke, Justice of the Illinois Appellate Court, will speak on the collecting of Chicago history.

Karen Skubish

Advance reservations, which are absolutely necessary, may be made by calling the Caxton office, 312/255-3710. Any special meal requirements (such as vegetarian) need to be made in advance. Members, \$25, guests, \$30.

The First National Bank of Chicago's parking garage, 40 S. Clark Street, offers a special parking rate after 5 p.m. 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 \$5.25



The Caxton Club
60 West Walton Street
Chicago, IL 60610

