



# Caxtonian

Journal of The Caxton Club of Chicago

Volume IV, No. 9

September 1996

## Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility* Proves to Be Sound Investment

The recent motion picture adaption of Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility* (with attendant republication of the book by no fewer than five American publishers plus an audio book version) reminds me of the evenings I spent reading this novel in the library of my grandparents' Dyer, Indiana, home in the 1960s. The setting was perfect: a room with glass-fronted bookcases and windows looking onto a terraced garden in full bloom.

I also recall standing in the doorway of the A-1 Book Store, a used bookshop on W. Washington St. in the Loop, operated by Bill and Doris Newman. They had been buying and selling used books in various locations in Chicago for at least 20 years — on North Ave., Clark St., Dearborn, and, eventually, on Rush St. Newman was honest and usually friendly to my father and me — we were, after all, long-time, frequent customers.

Among the dusty and disorganized clutter in his front window I spotted, just out of reach, a two-volume set of books that cried out to me, "19th Century!" Having a curiosity about books old, unusual, and out of reach, I waited until Newman had moved to the back of his store, then gingerly stepped into the window display. By the time he returned, I was standing in the doorway again with the books in hand. When I opened a volume to its title page (for the labels on the spine were too faded to read), I was astonished to discover I was holding a set of *Sense and Sensibility*, published in Philadelphia in 1833. Newman had priced the set at just \$1.50, and I bought it. The year was 1962. I had just graduated from high school.

Eight years later, I was living, in the words of my friend, Caxtonian Jay Marshall, "a Spartan life" on the outskirts of Ann Arbor, Michigan. I had recently



*J. Austen*

Jane Austen, as sketched by her sister Cassandra.

been discharged from the Army and was fulfilling a promise to myself that, if I lived through Vietnam, I would give myself a year to re-cover — "to read, write, and fly a kite," as I told anyone who inquired. During this period I resumed my habit of scouting for old books.

One afternoon at a garage sale, I came across a catalog from Goodspeed's Book Shop, Boston. The cover was entitled, *Rare Books*, and although undated, the catalog suggested it had been printed in the late 1930s. I acquired it for a dime.

In this catalog, Goodspeed offered the first American edition of Austen's novel *Emma*. The description included this statement: "The great rarity of American Jane Austen's is well known. [Austen bibliographer] Dr. Geoffrey Keyes was able to locate but one or two copies of any of the series published in Philadelphia in 1832-33." Goodspeed's price for *Emma* was \$150.

Any astute book scout or collector would know what to do next: seek out sources to learn more! All I cared to know, however,

was exactly where my copy of *Sense and Sensibility* was in my parent's house in Indiana. Because I had first discovered the set by happenstance and relished that fact, I was content to let luck inform me of the set's value at its leisure.

Finally, several months ago, I received a catalog that, you could say, I had been waiting on for more than three decades. The heading above "my" entry declares "First American of Her First Book" — published in Philadelphia by Carey & Lea, 1833. The bookseller describes his copy of *Sense and Sensibility* as being in "original quarter purple muslin and buff boards, labels, [and pages] uncut ... light stains on boards, worn at corners, light foxing ...." Not unlike my own copy.

"Carey & Lea published all of [Austen's] novels for the first time in America in 1832-33,..." the bookseller states, although he is not quite right, for Goodspeed's copy of *Emma* had been printed by M. Carey in 1816. However, I am inclined to agree with what is specifically said about *Sense and Sensibility*: "A rare printing. The only other set for which we can find a sale record in the last 20 years was one catalogued in 1990 at \$2,500, not so good as the present set. Housed in a silk box. \$2,000."

I don't know whether the bookseller has sold his copy or not. The question for me is, what will I do with my copy now that I know all I need to know about it? Perhaps I'll have a silk box made.

David Meyer



# Caxtonian

The Caxton Club  
Founded 1895



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## Friday Luncheon Program

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Secy - Bookkeeper - Dan Crawford



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# Musings...

More than 60 persons have contributed articles and other literary works to the *Caxtonian* since its first publication in September 1993 — with almost *no* coercion. We have published multiple pieces by more than 20 individuals.

This monthly newsletter has, in fact, become the *journal* of The Caxton Club, through which we record essential happenings of the mind as well as significant events of the club. Touched by a comment, an experience, or a book, men and women have been moved to respond in a public fashion through the *Caxtonian*, extending the interchange of thought in an ever-widening circle.

We begin our fourth year of monthly publication with this issue, and we enter our 102nd year of association of book aficionados in Chicago with the September luncheon and dinner meetings. Having gathered strength from our centennial celebration in 1995, we have deepened and broadened our fellowship in a most remarkable way, in great measure, it seems to me, through the pages of the *Caxtonian*.

Irish poet and Nobel laureate Seamus Heaney, who gave us, besides splendid poetry, superb prose in *The Government of the Tongue*, described something analogous to what we do as people of the book. In an essay, "Osip and Nadezhda Mandelstam," Heaney spoke of the power of poetry to bring into being a "first circle of friends...." He then quoted Nadezhda regarding the "moral and artistic nurture that can flow in a community of spirits who are truly entitled to refer to themselves as 'we': "I am quite convinced that without such a 'we,' there can be no proper fulfillment of even the most ordinary 'I,'...To find its fulfillment, the 'I' needs at least two complementary dimensions: 'we' and — if it is fortunate — 'you.' I think M[andelstam] was lucky to have had a moment in his life when he was linked by the pronoun 'we' with a group of others."

Many Caxtonians form a "first circle of friends." They are "linked by the pronoun 'we,'" and some by "you." Love of the book in its various dimensions — from design and printing, to writing and reading, to collecting and preserving — forges us into a camaraderie rare in any time but particularly rare in these days, when we seem intellectually fragmented with little leadership apparent, and when we hear the shrill "Bar-bar! Bar-bar!" of barbarians all around us — in public discourse tending toward violence, through deeds of renegade governments, and by injurious acts of misdirected or deranged people.

The Caxton Club is an enclave of civility through which we find expression and fulfillment — enriching even the most ordinary "I" — in exchange with one another in matters greater than any one of us and of immense importance to society. This civility distinguishes our luncheon and dinner meetings, month after month. It pulses constantly at the heart of the *Caxtonian*, issue after issue. A moral and aesthetic bond unites for common purposes all who share authentic civility.

Therefore, don't be surprised that, at the beginning of this new year, I say in a very personal manner, fellow bibliophile, "Thank you for loving books and the printed word as I do and for sharing this love so generously with others."

We too are most fortunate to have such a moment in life.

Robert Cotner  
Editor



# Loren Eiseley Appreciation Extended Through a Letter

This is a letter of appreciation emulating the introduction to your “Musings” in the June *Caxtonian*, handed to me by my husband, [Caxtonian] John McKinven. At last, an adequate, from-the-heart tribute to Loren Eiseley that I was overjoyed to read.

For many years since moving to Illinois, I had a “shrine” to Loren Eiseley in the form of nine of his books atop our living room lower bookcase. They were supported by root-burl chunks of walnut bookends. These came from a giant fallen tree in the high hills of Eastern Pennsylvania on property belonging to John’s cousin. A professional lumberman kept ruining his blades on the obstinate wood. Somehow, a day-long effort into darkness (shared by the professional, the cousin, John, and our son, also John, who was enroute home from Cornell) got a load of wood to a nearby mill. A day later, we were

on our way home, hauling a trailer of walnut.

The near-root pieces that John salvaged and left in beautiful crude “blocks,” lightly waxed, to me looked like perfect bookends, wonderfully uneven in height, girth, and grain — never to be found again on this earth. *They were made* to support my Eiseley books, unique as he is among writers, to me. (I would hope that he might enjoy their “evolution.”)

How did the shrine to this man come about? Many years ago, living in Connecticut, we learned from a family friend of his fascination with *The Immense Journey*. After reading his loaned copy, I had to own the book. Your “Musings” prompted my going to my worn paperback copy. I found it underlined throughout, and recalled the occasion of my review of it before

our Greenwich Congregational Church Women’s group.

John became sympathetic to my preoccupation with anthropology and doing justice to Loren Eiseley, and to my concern with making the subject sufficiently interesting and coherent. He went out and returned with a coil of new clothesline. This he proceeded to dye with different colors in sections graphically representing time — ages of reptiles, mammals, etc. My review was a success.

As for my shrine — space had to give way to grandchildren’s photos, but Loren Eiseley still has his own place in our upstairs library. After a busy summer, I hope to reacquaint myself with the writings of this remarkable man, thanks to your “Musings.”

Doris McKinven

## Chronology of the Writings of Jane Austen 1775-1817

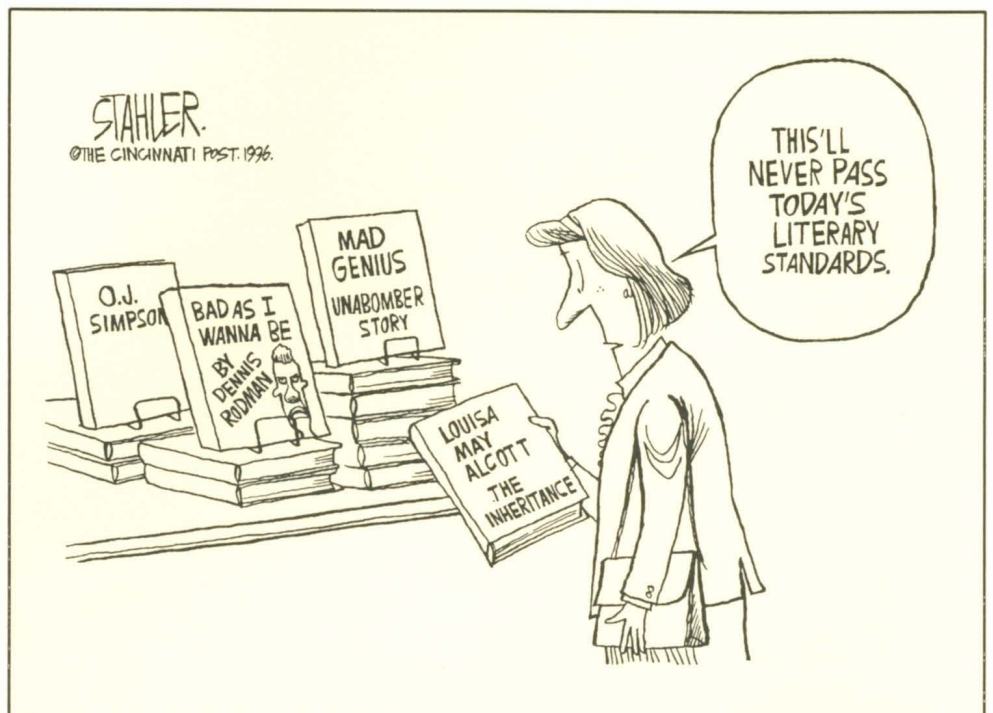
*Sense; and Sensibility: A Novel. By a Lady*, 1811  
*Pride and Prejudice: A Novel by the Author of Sense and Sensibility*, 1813  
*Mansfield Park*, 1814  
*Emma*, 1816  
*Northanger Abbey*, 1818  
*Persuasion*, 1818

The 1818 novels, posthumously published, announced in a biographical note by Austen’s brother Henry the open secret of Jane Austen’s authorship.

### Unpublished/Unfinished Novels

*Lady Susan*  
*The Watsons*  
*Sanditon*

From *The Penguin Companion to English Literature*, 1971, edited by David Daiches.



Cartoon by Jeff Stahler reprinted by permission of Newspaper Enterprise Association, Inc.

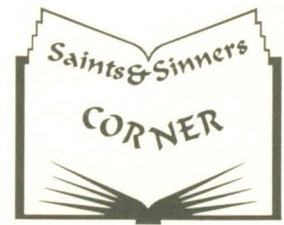


## One of First Five Women in Caxton Club Dies

Suzette Morton Zurcher Davidson, 86, died this May. She was one of the five notable women originally admitted to Caxton membership in 1976. In 1967 she had hosted a luncheon for the club at her home, Cricket Hill, before she addressed Caxtonians in the Sterling Morton Library of the Morton Arboretum, Lisle, IL.

Both her grandfather, Joy Morton, and her father, Sterling Morton, were Caxtonians too. Like them she was "worth her salt" as a dedicated bibliophile. In addition to promoting the collection of rare books, botanicals, herbals and rare prints at the Morton Library, she practiced book design and produced charming limited edition books on her private handpress, the Pocahontas Press.

Thomas J. Joyce  
President



Caxtonian Elmer Gertz, distinguished attorney and author, will be honored on his 90th birthday, September 30, when the Auditorium Theatre Council presents him the Beatrice T. Spachner Award. A founding member of the Council, Gertz has been active in the group for more than 20 years. He is now being recognized for his contribution to the restoration, autonomy, and integrity of the Auditorium Theatre. Caxtonians join in their recognition of fellow member Elmer Gertz.

## Hemingway Foundation Commends *Caxtonian*

If it's July, it must be time to celebrate Ernest Hemingway's birth. That's how the Ernest Hemingway Foundation of Oak Park approaches each summer. Your special Hemingway coverage in the July 1996 *Caxtonian* not only underscores the Oak Park commemoration, but promotes our first book, *Ernest Hemingway, The Oak Park Legacy*, as well. Thank you for such generous coverage.

I also appreciated your "Musings..." I was intrigued by how you studied Hemingway in 1987. I look forward, someday, to repeating your combined biography/fiction reading schedule. I especially liked your interpretation of ambivalence toward Hemingway as something we all may share as citizens of such a revolutionary, astounding, and compromising century.

Thanks to you and The Caxton Club for a truly outstanding issue of the *Caxtonian*.

Scott Schwar  
Chair  
Ernest Hemingway Foundation of Oak Park

## Fall Book Fair Slated

Oak Knoll Books, New Castle, DE, principal agent for Caxton publications in the U.S., will hold its third annual private press fair October 5-6. Seventeen American and British private presses and their printers will appear in person to showcase and discuss their outstanding work in the fine press and book arts community. The event will include exhibits, book signings, and a 20% discount on all Oak Knoll stock of over 10,000 out-of-print and new titles in the books about books, the history of the book, the book trade, and books arts fields. For information telephone 800/996-2556.

## Appreciation for *Caxtonian* From Washington State

I join with other Caxtonians congratulating you on all your past issues of the *Caxtonian* but especially the May one. I, too, had the good fortune to visit the Berland home and library.

Sorry to miss the Basbanes' talk but had the pleasure of reading the book.

Bob Kantor  
Non-Resident Caxtonian  
Bellevue, WA

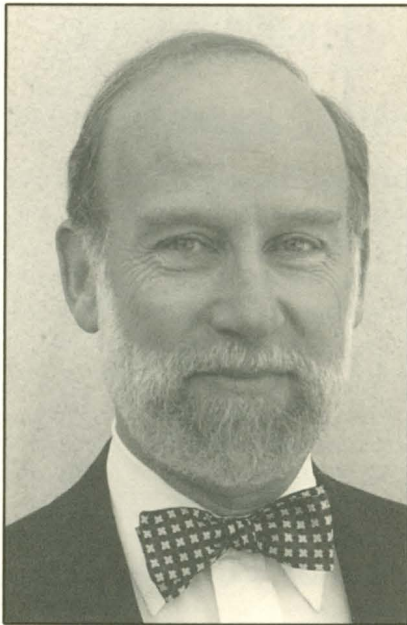
"A Lost Art Thrives," an illustrated feature article on the Monastery Hill Bindery and its president, Caxtonian Rhoda Hertzberg Clark, appeared in the July 18th *Chicago Tribune Magazine*. Caxtonians will want to see the excellent four-color photos by Nancy Stone and read the fine article about book-binding by Abigail Foerstner.

The Chicago Chapter of the Dickens Fellowship invites Caxtonians to attend a lecture by Philip Collins on "Dickens and the Dramatic," 7:30 p.m., October 3, at the Edward Crown Center, Loyola University. Tickets are \$10/advance; \$12/door. For reservations and information, telephone Caxtonian Herb Furse, 847/724-4594.

Members of The Caxton Club are invited to a reception hosted by the California Book Club, September 5, 5-7p.m., at 312 Sutter St., San Francisco. The event precedes the 16th Annual International League of Antiquarian Booksellers Fair, September 5-8. All members of the Fellowship of American Bibliophilic Societies (FABS) are invited. For information or reservations, telephone CBC President Ann Wipple at 415/781-7532.



# Openings and Closings: Some Thoughts on Civilization



(Photo by Julie Ainsworth)

## Director of Folger Library To Speak in September

Werner Gundersheimer, director of the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, D.C., and speaker at the September 18 dinner meeting of The Caxton Club, emigrated from Frankfort-am-Main, Germany in 1940 and was educated at Amherst College and Harvard University.

His specialty is European History, with special emphasis on Italian and French intellectual, social, and urban history. He has published extensively in these areas, including *Life and Works of Louis LeRoy* (1966), *The Italian Renaissance* (1965, 1994), and *French Humanism* (1969). In addition to these and four other books, Gundersheimer is author of more than 25 articles in scholarly publications.

He has taught at Harvard, the University of Wisconsin, the University of Pennsylvania, Johns Hopkins, Swarthmore, Amherst, and Tel Aviv University. Caxtonians will have a rare opportunity to hear this distinguished lecturer.

I have nearly finished reading Thomas Cahill's intriguing new book, *How the Irish Saved Civilization*. It is a book with delightful nuggets of information or insight on nearly every page. It could be filmed rather like a segment of James Burke's television series, "Connections," which I also highly recommend. Cahill describes how the animistic Celts in Ireland were converted to Christianity by St. Patrick, which resulted in an Irish obsession with books, compelling them to make copies of as many books as they could find. In the process, they inadvertently also preserved Western literature, which was simultaneously being annihilated on the continent during the Dark Ages.

I also recently read an essay in *Harper's Magazine*, "Closing the Books," by Arthur Krystal, who attempts to explain why he is ceasing to write and abandoning his life-long practice of reading, particularly fiction.

Contrasting the two readings with my recent experiences with The Caxton Club gives me pause. We Caxtonians are not saving civilization, but I enjoy our fellowship as one of the more civilized activities in which I engage. It is reassuring to me that so many members feel strongly attached to the club to renew their memberships again, despite the recent, but necessary, dues increase.

Similarly, I am encouraged by the renewal of a great number of non-resident members, many of whom are too distant to attend the monthly meetings with any regularity. I thank all for their devotion. However, the Caxton Council and I are sensitive to the complaints of those distant members who find the increased dues difficult to justify but who wish not to disaffiliate. Some of those have opted instead to become subscribers to the *Caxtonian*. These are new consequences and difficulties that I have asked the Membership Committee to explore in

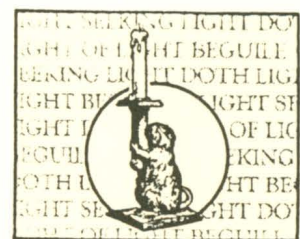
the coming months, and to make recommendations to the Council.

I wish to publicly thank the retiring members of the Council for their hard work these past three, intense years before, during, and after the centennial. I want to thank, as well, those continuing and new Council members for their willingness to work and serve. The new Council is listed on page two of this issue of the *Caxtonian*.

There is a bright, colorful glow in my mind's eye, the sunset of the first year of our second century as a society of civilized people of the book. In the glow, I see programs by guests, such as English bookbinder Philip Smith and Nicholas Basbanes, who has taken the whole sphere of bibliomania as his own turf. I recall memorable presentations by our own stalwart members, including David Easterbrook, Don Yanella, Elmer Gertz, Jane Rosenthal, and Gwendolyn Brooks.

Looking ahead, I see the sunrise of our new year of Caxtonian fellowship, and I prophesy another exciting year beginning with no less than the Director of the Folger Shakespeare Library, Werner Gundersheimer. I further prophesy that Arthur Krystal will *not* have a literary club named for him and that Caxtonians are *not* about to abandon reading or meeting together.

Thomas Joyce  
President



Logo of the Rowfant Club, Cleveland



# 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.

### September 13

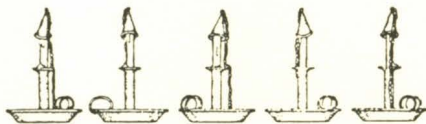
Caxton Historian Frank J. Piehl will entertain members and guests with an illustrated presentation, "Eugene Field, II, Forger Extraordinaire."

### October 11

Author, distinguished attorney, and long-time Caxtonian Elmer Gertz will speak on a topic dear to his heart and of great importance: "My Battle with the Book-Burners."

*Ed Quattrocchi  
Leonard Freedman*

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



The Caxton Club  
60 West Walton Street  
Chicago, IL 60610

## H. Yan Writes of 海明威

Hemingway 海明威 (in Chinese writing) was popular in China a long time ago. I heard of his name when I was in elementary school. As I liked mathematics and natural science, I did not read any novels until 1966, but I did hear of his name at a very young age. I was born September 2, 1952, but the name of *The Old Man and the Sea* was very popular among the elementary students in my time.

I read his short stories during the early 1980s. I recalled those were his late writings with the tone of irony and depression. It needs to have profound sense to understand sometimes.

It is very nice to visit Hemingway's museum and his birthplace in Oak Park. It is a wonderful and meaningful work done by the community.

*H. Yan  
Oak Park*

## Dinner Programs

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

### September 18

Werner Gundersheimer, director of the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, DC, will speak on this remarkable institution in our nation's capital.

### October 16

Patrick Reilly, professor of English and head of the English Department, University of Glasgow, Scotland, will lecture on "The Helpless Giant: Swift in Lilliput."

*Karen Skubish*

*Advance reservations, which are absolutely necessary, may be made by phoning the Caxton office at 312/255-3710. Any special meal requirements (such as vegetarian) need to be made in advance. Members and guests, \$35.*

*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*