



Caxtonian

Journal of The Caxton Club of Chicago

Volume VI, No. 8

August 1998

From Cuba with Love — A Literary Pilgrimage to the Caribbean

Editor's note: When Caxtonian editor Robert Cotner learned of Kenneth Paterson's forthcoming trip to Cuba, he commissioned Paterson to do a literary and book-arts piece for the Caxtonian on what he found there. Below is the first of three articles on Paterson's recent trip, under his British passport, to Havana and other parts of Cuba. Caxtonian Paterson's articles on literature and travel are published by MAST Publishing.

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Part I of III

In January of 1868 my countryman, the naturalist John Muir, sailed from Cedar Key, FL, on the schooner *Island Belle* bound for Havana, Cuba. Within 24 hours, battling a strong northerly wind, the *Island Belle* was entering Havana harbor past the grim mass of Morro Castle.

I had wanted to sail my Swedish-built sloop *Odin* from Key West to Havana ever since reading Muir's essay on his one-month stay in Cuba, part of his book, *One Thousand Mile Walk to the Gulf*. But the realities of the echoes of the Cuban missile crisis in the early 1960s still haunt America's foreign policy towards Cuba, and I decided not to endanger my boat by being a blockade runner, at least not one on the high seas.

Instead, I flew into Jose Marti International Airport on a Russian jet, an Ilyushin IL62, one of Air Cubana's fleet. I enjoyed the three-and-one-half hour flight from Toronto, Canada. The passengers were not the usual group of business people intently clicking away on laptop computers. They were a colorful group of individuals. Many were obviously Cubans returning home and excited at the thought of seeing family and friends again. A group of Canadians was going on vacation to the many hotels built along the white sand beaches of Varadero. The American couple from Detroit sitting next to me was in their 60s told and me they had spent their vacations for the past 12 years working through their church and helping out at clinics and schools throughout Latin America. The Cuban cabin crew was kind and very friendly. When we landed at 9 p.m., applause broke out from the passengers, not from a sense of relief but rather of exuberance. I cleared



A bronze bust of Ernest Hemingway made from melted propellers donated by Cuban fisherman. "Hemingway would have liked that gesture," Paterson says. The memorial to America's great novelist stands near the harbor in Cojimar, where Hemingway's fishing boat, the Pilar, was moored. (Photo by and from the collection of Kenneth Paterson.)

customs, and a polite young customs officer welcomed me to Cuba. Armed with a handful of Spanish phrases gleaned from old John Wayne movies and the name of my hotel, I hailed a cab and set off into the Cuban night, catching glimpses of palm trees, posters with the image of the Pope and Che Guevara and wondering what I was doing there. Ignacio, the cab driver, seemed to have a personal stake in making sure that I liked Cuba and the Cuban people. On the 20-minute ride to my hotel I heard about the revolution, Fidel, Che, and about Ignacio's family — he had two small children. I also listened to a tape of Benny Goodman. As Ignacio put the tape in he said "Senor Benny's music is very sweet."

The Hotel Nacional stands on a cliff overlooking Havana Harbor and the 16th Century Morro Castle. The Nacional is *grand* in the old sense of the word, with a well tended air of Moorish elegance. The hotel was built in 1930 from a design by the Chicago architectural firm, McKim, Mead, and White, stands eight stories high, and is white, topped with two Moorish towers capped in red tiles. The entrance driveway is lined with royal palm trees and gardens beautifully planted with tropical flowers and shrubbery. The cavernous, vaulted lobby has high wood-beamed ceilings and the floors are of mosaic tiles. The crowned heads of Europe have stayed here, as well as the uncrowned heads of the American Mafia in its heyday. Winston Churchill visited here as did the Duke of Windsor. All of old Hollywood seems to have stayed here. Discrete little photo plaques designate the rooms where the great and the nefarious spent their nights. For some reason, after the flight, checking in that Sunday night had an added childish boost for me when I found that a few doors down from my room my boyhood hero, Johnny Weismuller, had stayed for a few nights — Tarzan in Havana but no mention of Cheetah.

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Musings...

"Infinity" stands on the National Mall at an entrance to the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History in Washington, DC. Created by Chicago-educated artist Jose de Rivere (1904-1985) in 1967, the 31-foot-tall sculpture was the first piece of abstract art federally commissioned to complement the modern design of the new federal buildings being built along the Mall.

Atop its black granite pedestal the "Infinity" sculpture slowly revolves, a single spiral contained within and completing a circle. The gleaming, stainless steel bar composing the design, wrought with the tools of the blacksmith's trade, "unites," according to museum curator, David Shayt, "de Rivere's interests in the manipulation of space, light, time, and materials." The outer ring of the circle dips and then rises toward its parameter — approaches its origination without returning to it — before moving in a new, downward direction to fulfill the graceful spiral, which rises upward again to complete the orb of the ever-revolving work of art, always advancing through time and space toward new vistas, unfamiliar destinations — a sagacious assertion of *Infinity*. The sculpture, a personal favorite of mine since I first saw it shortly after it was erected, is a splendid metaphor for great literature and the books containing that literature.

"Come In," one of Robert Frost's finest lyric poems, will serve as a perfect illustration of what I have in mind. The opening two lines of the poem —

*As I came to the edge of the woods,
Thrush music—Hark!*

— move in a circle emanating from Dante, Shakespeare, Thomas Hardy, and Walt Whitman. Encompassed within the poem are styles suggestive of Gerard Manly Hopkins, George Herbert, and early English balladeers, so subtly achieved by Frost as to be scarcely noticed by most readers.

The poem advances, almost antiphonally, through an encounter of narrator and thrush, along a course characteristic of Frost's vision in the late Modern Age. As in his elegant "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening," though more somber, the narrator imagines an invitation to come in to the woods for a rendezvous with an undefined darkness, which it lies within his freedom to accept — for whatever ends. But the narrator's refusal of the invitation in the concluding stanza carries the reader toward infinitude —

*But no, I was out for stars:
I would not come in.
I meant not even if asked,
And I hadn't been.*

The last three lines, reminiscent in tone of Thoreau's uniquely American whimsy, provide — even in the face of abiding alienation — concluding delight, representative of Frost's distinctly American voice.

Great literature and all great art, it seems to me, stand as testaments to the sweep of human promise in the face of compelling reasons to the contrary. The finest humanities courses in our schools in days gone by brought us together in an appreciation of the grandeur — and the grit — of things human, which have at heart the connotation of timelessness.

As long as Earth revolves and human beings find eloquence in and through books and the literature therein contained, we shall, I believe, know solace and discover the necessary courage to move into new venues of thought and belief, journeying always along that awesome and uncharted pathway called *Infinity*.

The background image of "Infinity" on this page is from a photograph provided through the courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution and is used with special arrangement with the Institution.

Robert Cotner
Editor

Some Thoughts on the Evolution of the Caxtonian

A Journal in the House — Crafting Five Years of 'Predictable Delight'

Editor's note: To observe issuing of the 60th Caxtonian — the completion of the publication's fifth year — editor Robert Cotner asked one of the club's resident Renaissance persons, whose Ph.D. from the University of Illinois — or some other foreign influence — made him one of the finer specialists in all things literary, from the classics to technics, to offer an assessment. That person, Caxtonian Michael Sawdey, here presents his unvarnished and very personal appraisal of where we've been, if not where we're going, with this publication devoted to literature and the book arts.

If you don't understand a thing, at least begin by describing it as well as you can. If that worked for Aristotle, confronted by the entire poetic opus of the Golden Age, might it not work for me, as well, perching on my lap a three-inch-thick stack of Caxtonians and searching for the first clue?

When Robert Cotner, chief begetter of the publication, asked me to "write something" about the five years of publication, I had that mixed chill that so often greets a writer at the outset of a propitious, but dangerous, project. Chill One — the grand prospect of historiography, of open possibilities. Chill Two — the reality of where the devil do I start, even, how shall I make myself read all of it? I tend to take bites off the edges of most reading, getting more often what I myself need or want or can stomach, than what the writer, likely, had in mind for me. I've been getting the Caxtonian for about three years now, as a member, reading it in my spasmodic fashion, or not, checking the back-page calendar to see what in my life will stop me this month from getting to lunch or dinner meeting, then probably losing my copy. (My wife, also a Caxtonian, will surely take better care of her copy, so I can always ask for hers.)

Given the foregoing, you may imagine it was something of a new experience for me, arriving late in the game, to take the stack (the entire run, as it were) of Caxtonians that Cotner handed to me some months ago, and see if there were a way to read them at a single sitting and, Poe-like, come away with a dominant impression. There were n't — at least not for this not-so-gentle reader, who not only kept getting interrupted by grandchildren, a day job, and other assorted bits of life and catastrophe, but who made up his own willful disruptions at every turn as well.

Caxtonian A Newsletter of The Caxton Club of Chicago Volume I, No. 3 November 1993 Children's Books — They're Not Just For Children Anymore

Caxtonian A Newsletter of The Caxton Club of Chicago Volume IV, No. 7 July 1996 Hemingway in Oak Park: Memorialized in Home and Magazine

Caxtonian A Newsletter of The Caxton Club of Chicago Volume VI, No. 1 May 1998 Poe's Magnum Opus, Eureka: A Prose Poem

Reading every word lasted about the first half of the first issue. Thereafter, I passed into the realm of "dominant impressions," "gestalts," and "form and mass," much the way, I am told, that pharmacists decipher physicians' signatures on prescriptions. More fun, anyway, if less exacting — and few die from mis-criticism.

The gross anatomy? After reading the first three or four issues, I thought it was obvious: Starts as an events calendar and progresses to a journal of books and authors. Not!! (as the fourth-graders say). There are excursions into "reports of proceedings," into "policies," even, heaven help us, "financial statements." Building a stable of authors takes longer than assembling the mechanical pieces of a periodical, and demand outruns supply by fits. And it must have been a task to convince the lot of free spirits (curmudgons?) to get with the program.

The container? The Caxtonian you see today has much the look and feel of Volume I, Number 1, September 1993. Format, layout, paper, ink, and second color are consistent. At Volume IV, Number 9, the screened box behind Caxton's colophon in the masthead received a surrounding hairline rule. A closer look seems to show a slight reduction in white space after the early issues, giving a more solid feel to the pages (an improvement, I think), and the length of the whole thing, of course, grows — from four to six to eight pages. The only marked departure in design is the Centennial Issue (Volume III, No. 1, January 1995), which strikes me as "interesting" (in the sense that the guests say the Tomato Surprise is "interesting"). Not that it's unattractive, with coated stock and four-color halftones and the black-and-red centennial logo — but I doubt one would want it as a steady diet. In a way, it illustrates the durability and versatility of the ongoing Caxtonian design: the frequently stock (uncoated, understated, off-white), and the warm palette of second colors, is, in recent years, joined by judicious

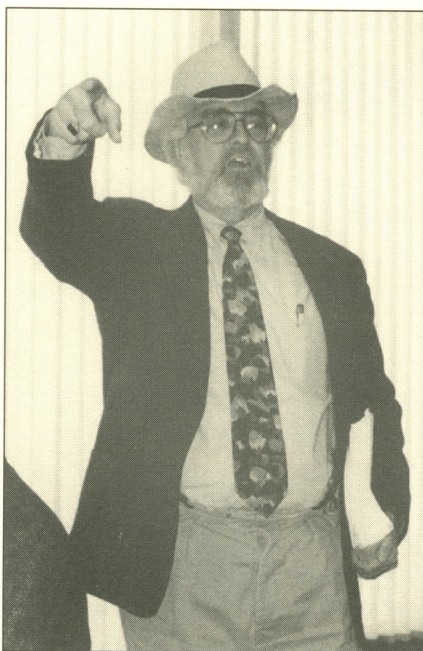
Caxtonian

(Continued from Page Three)

use of four-color halftones. Like all good design, it recedes from view, while absolutely controlling that same view. *Artes celat artem*, and all that.

The substance? The old publishing chestnut has it that all newsletters are built around the Three Bs — Babies, Birthdays, and Bowling. Presumably the ur-wag in this case was thinking of factory house organs, but the pattern holds: news (literally, what's new — babies), communicating the calendar (birthdays), and establishing the connection of common interests in the group (bowling). However, Cotner must have had something else in mind from pretty early on, and seems to have been in a hurry to get somewhere else, because this newsletter pattern for content lasts, pure, for about two issues. In Volume I, No. 3, Tom Joyce's lead article, "Children's Books — They're Not Just For Children Anymore," gives a glimpse of things to come. Sure, it's an announcement of the program for the November dinner meeting, but it is also a concise perspective article on the place of the P.F. Volland Company in the development of modern children's literature. Suddenly, the boundaries have expanded by an order of magnitude — the *Caxtonian* is to be about things that are beyond reportage.

The whole organism, finally? The challenge of all periodical forms is to recreate a recognizable facsimile, again and again, out of constantly changing and often unpredictable raw materials, all without resorting to cloning. This organistic shaping process emerges in just about every description of a successful periodical enterprise — I've seen it used for such disparate ventures as Robert J. Lertsema's classical music programs and William Shawn's *New Yorker* — and I suppose a Rolling Stones concert is, or at least was, no different. In the case of the *Caxtonian*, the basic newsletter content keeps coming back for the first year or two, but then the lead articles on a broader pattern become more regular. Then, the supporting backbeat of Cotner's "Musings" comes in — the column appears from the first issue, but it is somewhere into the third year when one can regularly find it shaped so that it provides either a support of or a sidelight to the theme of the issue. Like as not, Cotner once wrote to the author in



Caxtonian editor/founder Robert Cotner models a new summer straw hat at the Caxton luncheon on April 24. When buying the hat recently in Philadelphia, Cotner asked his wife whether she thought he resembled somewhat VanGogh. She replied, "No, more like Van Went." (Photo by Michael Sawdey.)

question, or to the author's spouse or descendants or publisher. (Is there anyone of intellectual or artistic note in America in the last three decades to whom he *hasn't* written — gotten a luminous or illuminating reply?) and so, by adding the secret ingredient of "Musings," the otherwise public information of a *Caxtonian* becomes what the snooty stores call "ours alone" for all Caxtonians. Add in bibliographies and publication lists, and all the usual newsletter material, and exquisite reproductions of illustrations from obscure sources, and what do we have?

Churlishly, one might say it is a well-wrought urn for the program of the next meeting, and, occasionally, the ashes of the last. In other words, a *journal*, such an organism being defined as a periodical that not only reports what was and is scheduled to be, but also essays why things are as they are, how they might be, and ought to be, what they mean, all in a setting of predictable delight. Argol, *Wired* is not a journal; *Caxtonian* is. And beginning with Volume IV, No. 9, there is something else new, besides that hairline rule around the Caxton colophon. No longer does the masthead proclaim that this is "A

Newsletter of the Caxton Club of Chicago." Rather, it is what it has been becoming (Heiddiger, work with me) at least since Volume I, No. 3 -- the "Journal of the Caxton Club of Chicago."

Author's Note: I suspect that Robert Cotner, creator and editor of the Caxtonian, is constitutionally incapable of avoiding the contextualization of anything he touches in this life. I seem to recall that, when he began fixing up an old wooden sailboat, he couldn't start stripping paint until he knew the history of the company that built it. Thus it didn't much surprise me when I saw this same obsession at work in his crafting of the Caxtonian — clearly, he expanded the mission and form of the publication until no element of it remained a mere fact, a loose atom out of context. Intentional fallacies notwithstanding, I do hope that he sees in this description of his work something of what he had in mind, or at least what he hoped the Caxtonian would become. I should add that, although I have known Bob for many years, and have had a number of oblique discussions with him about the newsletter, my comments and conclusions in this article are pretty much an exercise in pure induction. When he handed me the stack of Caxtonians last year, his only comment was that this was the only complete set, so would I please not lose it — I haven't, and I hope I also haven't lost the nuances of a very rich gift that Bob has crafted for all of us in the club these past five years — the Caxtonian as a living journal.

Michael R. Sawdey

A Caxton Club Quiz

1. Who is the only Caxtonian, so cherished as a speaker, to have been invited to speak three times at the Holiday Revels?
2. Which Caxtonian has spoken at our dinners more times than any other Caxtonian?

See Page Eight for answers

A Reminder About Archiving

Caxton Club officers and chairs of committees are reminded to deposit their correspondence files and other valuable documents in the club archives. The proper procedure is to forward them to Dan Crawford at the Newberry Library. He will ensure that they receive proper attention.

All Caxtonians are encouraged to deposit a photograph in the archives. Only a few members responded to the first request. Surely Caxtonians are not bashful!

Cuba

(Continued from Page One)

I looked out my room window onto a perfectly black night. In the morning I found that the room overlooked the Gulf, and fishing boats were already out at 5 a.m. on a blue, tranquil sea. Below the hotel stretched the great boulevard, the Malecon, starting to stir with early morning traffic. The hotel staff had the kindness and concern of family members as I ate my early breakfast of scrambled eggs, mangoes, papayas, good bread, and strong, sweet Cuban coffee.

A morning walk along the Malecon showed the erosion caused by salt air, the passing of time, and a revolution with little money entering middle-age. The magnificent Spanish colonial houses, exotic in their elaborate stone and plaster works were crumbling. An astonishing range of pastel colors delineated different houses and had faded to a delicacy not easily caught on a palette. Here and there, washing hung from windows, drying in the breeze coming in from the Gulf. And yet in all the decay an astonishing cheerfulness and vitality of spirit. Children swam in the ocean, couples walked smiling arm-in-arm along the great boulevard and the traffic picked up as the sun rose higher. Fiats, Laddas, Mercedes, Nissans, a rainbow of old American cars, bicycles, and the occasional horse-drawn carriage all swept along the Malecon observing a driving courtesy to each other that I had not seen in a long time.

Jesus, a dignified, stocky, black Cuban cab driver of middle-age, drove me to the Hemingway house, Finca Vigia, in the suburb of St. Francisco De Paula in a bright red 1997 Mercedes. He knew very little English but had many tapes of Benny Goodman, Frank Sinatra, Glen Miller, Artie Shaw, and Ella Fitzgerald, along with many of the great Cuban musicians past and present. I had my John Wayne Spanish and my Hohner harmonica, so we got along just fine. The driveway leading to Finca Vigia is lined with royal palms. After stopping at a small gate house where I paid the equivalent of three dollars, we drove up the drive and stopped at a little parking lot. The house was farther up the hill. I had been told that one could only



Paterson and Gregorio Fuentes, who is acknowledged to be the model for Santiago, the Old Man in *The Old Man and the Sea*, was Hemingway's First Mate on the *Pilar*. (Photo from the collection of Kenneth Paterson.)



Hemingway's fishing boat, the *Pilar*, is displayed near his home. Above a portion of the ship's cockpit and pilot's wheel are visible. (Photo by and from the collection of Kenneth Paterson.)

look in the windows of the house and walk the grounds. No entry was possible.

The beautiful white Spanish villa sat at the top of a flight of broad stairs. The outside of the house was in good repair. I looked in the windows and saw animal heads on the walls, trophies from Hemingway's many hunts in Africa — springboks, kudus, and one very imposing water buffalo head. I wandered down a palm-lined path that led to the swimming pool, now empty, and looked at Hemingway's dog cemetery. Beyond the pool, resting on a large cradle and

covered by a timbered roof, stood the legendary boat, *Pilar*, of Gulf-shore-fishing and Nazi-submarine-hunting fame. Built by the Wheeler Company of Brooklyn, NY, of steam bent oak ribs and planking, she was a 38', spartan, no-nonsense, no-luxury, fishing creature. On her bow she had the two lightning arrows and the Wheeler logo in stainless steel. In the cockpit was the "fighting" chair where marlin, swordfish, tuna, and other giants of the Gulf Stream were hunted and lured up from the blue depths. For weeks on end Hemingway had lived on this boat, had loved her honesty and simplicity. I have the same love for *Odin*, built on the Island of Orust on the west coast of Sweden.

I realized I could not leave Cuba without getting inside the house. The glimpses through the windows were not sufficient. I had seen *Pilar*, and I felt I was starting to better understand this most complex and yet simple of writers. I asked the assistant director, Caridad Valdes, for permission to go inside the house. At first it was not possible. I continued to plead my case, quoting Robert Burns and William Wallace on freedom and brotherhood. She introduced me to the Director, Danilo M. Arrate Hernandez, and again I pleaded my case. Finally, I was asked if I could return the following day at 1 p.m., and, by the way, had I visited Gregorio Fuentes, Hemingway's First Mate of the *Pilar* for many years and companion and friend on many Gulf Stream adventures. Surprised, I asked how old Gregorio was and was told 101 and still living in Cojimar, the small fishing village. Gregorio was widely acknowledged as the inspiration for *The Old*

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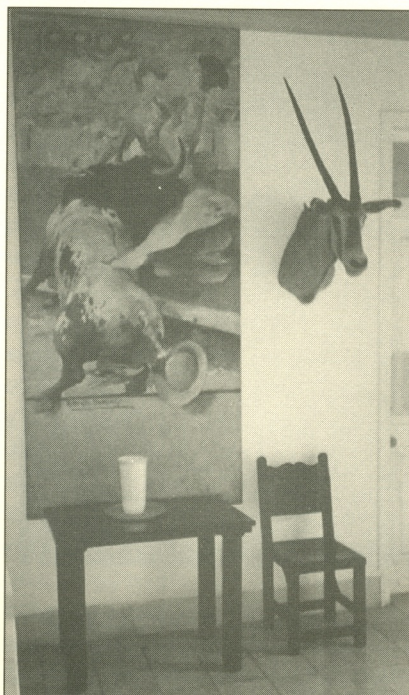
Cuba

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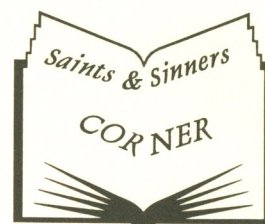
Man and the Sea's Santiago. Hemingway kept the *Pilar* at Cojimar. I thanked my new friends at the Museo Hemingway and set off with Jesus, my driver, for Cojimar to the taped music of Guantanamo, sung by one of Cuba's famous singers, Joseito Fernandez, and accompanied by me on the harmonica with Jesus playing percussion of the dashboard of his elegant red Mercedes. The village was about 30 minutes away from Havana. When we arrived, Jesus casually said, "Oh yes, I know Gregorio and the family." We drove down the hill from the highway into the village. I looked at the harbor guarded by the small Spanish fort, El Torreón. In 1762 the British invaded Cuba through this harbor and captured the country for King George III. La Terraza, the restaurant and bar mentioned in *The Old Man and the Sea*, was there. Several years before, Fidel Castro had noticed its state of decay, and the building was restored. We looked inside because Jesus had said that Captain Fuentes sometimes walked around for a bowl of soup and to talk with the fisherman of the village. We were told by the owner that Gregorio had not been around for a few days but was at home. The simple house, painted white with green trim and red tile roof, was just around the corner from the restaurant. Jesus knocked on the door and Gregorio's grandson welcomed us in to the living room. Gregorio Fuentes was born in the Canary Islands and came to Cuba when he was 10. He had sailed with his father for the first time at the age of four. In 1931, he met Hemingway at Dry Tortuga Island off the Florida Keys when they were both sheltering from a sudden storm. Gregorio was a captain of a small Cuban fishing boat. Later Hemingway asked Gregorio to be First Mate on the *Pilar*. They were together from 1935 to 1960. Gregorio Fuentes came through from the kitchen when he had finished lunch. He was wearing a captain's hat and was slightly stooped. His face was leathered by wind, sea, and sun. His eyes were bright and intelligent as he looked me over. I was wearing my sailing clothes. Jesus introduced me as the Captain of the boat, *Odin*. Captain Fuentes smiled and shook my hand. His grip was strong. "So, a captain, a Scottish captain, good," and he invited us to sit down. In poor

English and poor Spanish, we managed to hold a conversation. He asked me what kind of boat I sailed, and I showed him the photo of *Odin* I carried in my wallet. "It is a very sweet boat," he said and asked his grandson to get a pen. "I will sign the back of your photograph—it will bring me pleasure and maybe you will think of me when you are on Lake Michigan." With a slow, deliberate hand he wrote his name. He suggested that I come back the following day as there was going to be a small fishing tournament but only for the village fishermen." You will get some photographs with your little camera." I looked at the clean, simple room. On one wall was a painting of Hemingway with Gregorio. Jesus took some photos of me and Gregorio, and I took some of Gregorio alone and with his grandson, a stripling in his 50s. I offered a small sum of money to Gregorio to buy cigars, whiskey, or maybe a small present for his wife. He waved it away and said, "Only friendship is exchanged between captains." That seemed a good moment to take leave—pride is something that Scots and Cubans know a lot about. We had lunch at La Terraza. The fish stew was outstanding and all the restaurant windows were open, letting in the breeze from the harbor.

To Be Continued



Hallway, Finca Vigía (Photo by and from the collections of Kenneth Paterson.)



Caxtonian Hayward Blake has been on the lecture circuit lately. In June, he lectured on graphic design and presented a critique of publications at the Association of Educational Publishers at their annual conference in Washington, DC. At a pre-conference session, Blake and award-winning New York magazine editor, Elaine Israel, conducted a hands-on design and editorial workshop, "What Makes a Winner — Creating Award-Winning Publications."

In July, he provided the same type of workshop activity, exploring the effective use of design in publications, for a communications workshop, "The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly," at the annual meeting of the American Association of Medical Society Executives in San Diego, CA.

Under the direction of Caxtonian Ingrid Lesley — one of her last assignments before retiring as the Chief of Special Collections & Preservation Division of the Chicago Public Library — an exhibition graces the exhibition hall of the Harold Washington Library Center this summer. "Windows on Our Past: The Chicago Public Library at 125" opened April 8 and will run through January 10, 1999. The exhibition features a visual and textual history of the public library in Chicago — from the days when it was a "wanderer for so many years without a home of its own" to its present elegant location at the Harold Washington Center. For information on this and other activities at the library, telephone 312/747-1252.



A High Spot in Book Collecting . . .

Caxtonian Meets Descendants of Eugene Field; Receives New Book for His Collection

Truly memorable moments have been few and far between in my life. One of them occurred on Saturday, October 5, 1996. In truth, there were four, all in one day! I had traveled to St. Louis to attend the 60th anniversary celebration for the Eugene Field House and Toy Museum, where several events had been scheduled for the day.

The first memorable moment was meeting descendants of Eugene Field, who had traveled from California, Michigan, and other locations to attend the gala. I met Eugene Field's grandson, Charles Kellogg Field, III, for the first time and renewed my friendship with a second grandson, Frederick Skiff Field, Jr. These gracious and affable gentlemen carried on the traditions established by their grandfather, welcoming guests and helping to create a festive atmosphere for the events of the day.

The second memorable moment arrived when the books were distributed at an afternoon reception. In commemoration of the museum's anniversary, and also the 100th anniversary of the founding of Charles Scribner's Sons, the publisher had reissued Eugene Field's most popular book, *Poems of Childhood*. I received my copy of the deluxe, limited edition for my own collection, complete with especially designed and inscribed bookplate. The first edition had been illustrated by Maxfield Parrish. His enchanting artwork was reproduced in the new edition. His granddaughter, Joanna Parrish Gordon, spoke at the dedication, and she added my third memorable moment in our long private conversation.

These three events alone would have made the trip a smashing success, but the fourth topped them all. Fred Field had asked me to meet with him privately to examine a scrapbook that he had just donated to the museum. We met there in the afternoon, went down the ancient stairs to the basement, a trip that Eugene Field's mother must have made hundreds of times, and sat side-by-side for an hour at a table examining a scrap book that Eugene Field had created a century earlier. It was a commercial book, designed to hold newspaper clippings of interest to the owner. This one contained hundreds of clippings, from tiny two-liners to large illustrated articles. They were about Eugene Field from

newspapers all over the Midwest. They were dated 1875. Entries on the title page and throughout the book were in Field's unmistakable script. Fred Field did not disclose how he came to possess the book, but he had just donated it to the museum. We marveled at the contents.

Eugene had started his career in journalism in 1873 as a cub reporter on the *St. Louis Evening Journal*. In 1875, at the age of 25, he moved to the *St. Joseph Gazette* as city editor. After only two years in journalism, his reputation had spread so widely that editors throughout the Midwest were exchanging barbs with him in their editorial columns. Three excerpts hint at the flavor of the clippings. From the *Fort Scott Monitor*, "Down at Jefferson City they call Field, of the *St. Louis Journal*, 'Dirty Shirt Gene.' Thereby hangs a tail." From the *Leavenworth Commercial*: "Field borrowed and abused Hasbrook's shirt, and then in his 'doggerel' way charges the 'dirty' work upon us. Hasbrook knows who soiled his linen and laments the degradation of his former friend and associate, Eugene Field." And from the *Versailles Gazette*: "Eugene Field's jokes are ground out under a blue glass window, which explains the sudden and prolonged attacks of blues, so prevalent among the constant readers of that prosy sheet." The scrap book contains over 600 journalistic jousting gems. Fred and I were kept in stitches for an hour as we examined the clippings.

But alas! The book itself was in terrible condition. The cover was completely detached from the spine, and it was water stained. Part of the cloth had worn through to the boards. The paper was so embrittled that turning the pages threatened to tear them. And the various types of glue and other adhesives used in mounting the clippings had discolored badly. Something had to be done to save the book. I volunteered at once to investigate how the book could be restored and to underwrite the cost of restoration.

Research back in Chicago located a conservator capable and willing to take on the project. On September 10, 1997, the scrap book was consigned to Robert Weinberg at the Graphic Conservation Company in Chicago for the tedious process of restoration.

The pages were disbound, carefully dry cleaned, and copied on archival paper. Individual pages were washed and the individual clippings were removed, washed, and cleaned of residual adhesive. Alum sizing was removed. The pages and clippings were deacidified with magnesium bicarbonate, dried, and blocked, and tears were repaired with starch paste and Japanese paper. Using the copies of the original pages as a guide, each clipping was remounted in exactly its original position with starch paste. The pages were re sewn and new end papers were added. The cover was repaired separately by cleaning and repairing the boards and replacing lost cloth with cloth of similar color and texture. The lost design on the front cover was carefully reproduced. Finally the book was reassembled to look as good as new. It has been reconditioned to last for several hundred years without further deterioration. The restoration, which took over three months, was completed on December 23, 1997.

In view of the rarity of the book, I was unwilling to entrust it to the U.S. Mail or to UPS, so it rested in my library until February 27, when I delivered it personally to Marianne and Peter Gleich in St. Louis. It has since been on display at the museum. One set of the archival copies of the pages will be on deposit at the museum in St. Louis and the other will be donated to the University of Chicago Library later this year, along with my collection of Eugene Fieldiana. Thus it will be available to future scholars who will find a wealth of information about the journalistic practices in Midwest newspapers a hundred years ago, in addition to a marvelous insight into the character of Eugene Field, the Poet of Childhood. We are deeply indebted to the late Frederick Field for making this remarkable keepsake available to future generations of scholars and Field devotees.

Author's note: By agreement of both editors, this article appears in Field Notes, the newsletter of the Eugene Field House and St. Louis Toy Museum, and in the Caxtonian, the monthly journal of The Caxton Club of Chicago.

Frank J. Piehl
Caxton Club Historian

Book Marks

Luncheon Programs

*Your Special Luncheon Invitation. . .
Luncheon programs will resume in September*

American Printing History Association to Meet in Chicago, October 10

October 10, 1998, is a special "Bibliophile Saturday," when the American Printing History Association (APHA) will hold its first Chicago meeting at the Newberry Library.

The full-day program will concern the history of printing and publishing in Chicago. Planned talks include one by former Caxtonian Greer Allen, New Haven, CT, on the university press tradition; Caxtonian Claire Badaracco on commercial design between the war; Caxtonian Michelle Cloonen on women in the book arts; Caxtonian Paul Gehl on Robert Middleton's type designs, and Peter Hanff of Bancroft Library, University of California at Berkeley, on the fine press tradition. Receptions are planned for Friday and Saturday evenings; and tours of Printer's Row and other downtown sites are planned for Sunday morning.

APHA is a national organization, which publishes the distinguished journal, *Printing History*, edited by David Pankow. The meeting of APHA will be an opportunity for Caxtonians to meet the national membership and, as can be seen from the above listed speakers, to participate in a reunion, of sorts, for non-resident Caxton Club members. The all-Caxtonian local arrangement committee includes Bruce Beck, Paul Gehl, Michael Godow, Susan Levy, Alice Schreyer, and George Thompson.

Registration for non-APHA members is \$75; for members, \$65. For further information about APHA and the conference, telephone Paul Gehl at 312/255-3645 or Michael Godow at 312/280-2510.

All luncheon and dinner 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. Dinner meetings begin with spirits, 5 p.m., dinner 6 p.m., lecture, 7 p.m. 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 \$5.75. Members planning to attend luncheons or dinners must make advance reservations by phoning the Caxton number, 312/255-3710. Luncheon for members and guests, \$20. Dinner, for members and guests, \$35.

Internet users may visit The Caxton Club at the following address: <http://www.caxtonclub.org>

Dinner Programs

Your Special Dinner Invitation. . .

Date: August 19, 1998

Place: The Mid-Day Club

Speaker: Gretchen Lagana

Caxtonian Gretchen Lagana, former Council member, Curator of Jane Addams Hull House, and Head of Special Collections, University Library, and Associate Professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago, will present an illustrated lecture, "Collecting Chicago Design: The R. Hunter Middleton Chicago Design Archive."

Lagana will describe the archive, located in the Special Collections Department of the University Library, UIC, and named for former Caxtonian the late R. Hunter Middleton (1898-1985). Middleton was a prolific and distinguished type designer, who for more than 40 years served as the dean of Chicago's unique and influential design community. She will also highlight the work of other Caxtonian designers represented in the UIC collection

A native of California, Lagana has lived in the Midwest since 1968. She was Curator of Rare Books at Memorial Library, University of Wisconsin-Madison before joining the UIC faculty in 1981. She has degrees from the University of Wisconsin-Madison (Library Science) and San Jose University (European Diplomatic History). She has been a Caxtonian since 1983 and is a member of the American Printing History Association and the Bibliographical Society of America.

The August dinner meeting traditionally has been a time to bid our "snow birds" farewell before they leave for their winter nests in Southern California, Arizona, and Florida. Let's give them a rousing send-off as we share the forthcoming dinner program by Caxtonian Lagana.

*C. Fred Kittle
Vice President and
Program Chair*

Caxton Quiz Answers

Answer 1: Ned Rosenheim. He spoke on "The Lost Art of Anger" in 1960, on "An Argument Against Abolishing Scholarship" in 1971, and on "Editing, Publishing, and Perishing" in 1981. His most recent appearance at the Caxton Club rostrum was on January 19, 1994, when he spoke on "Swift to the End: Reflections on a Life with Jonathan Swift." Those who braved the sub-zero weather that January evening will recall the overflow crowd that gave him a standing ovation at the end of his presentation

Answer 2: The late Ralph Newman, who died July 18, was our dinner speaker on five occasions. He spoke on "How They Want to Be Remembered" in 1957, on "The Economics of Collecting" in 1961, "On the Care and Feeding of a Sesquicentennial" in 1968, on "Books and Politics: The Trials and Tribulations of a Library Board President" in 1972, and on "Robert Todd Lincoln: Caxtonian, Collector, Chicagoan" in 1985. Ralph also spoke at a Friday Luncheon on "A Handful of Chicago Collectors" in 1993.