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Polar Books and Maps Collection Grew from Passion for Adventure

People are often curious as to how someone living in the suburbs of Chicago would get interested in Polar material. My interest developed quite by accident in the 1950s while I was working in the Chicago Loop. In those days there were a number of used bookstores carrying a variety of used hardbound books and a surprising number of what would become rare books. Forty years later all of these old, low-rent buildings with rundown bookstores have disappeared from Chicago.

Being a curious and catholic reader, I was attracted by Capt. George Back's *Narrative of the Arctic Land Expedition to the Mouth of the Great Fish River* and *Along the Shores of the Arctic Ocean in the years 1833, '34 and '35.* I purchased a copy for a small sum and was most astonished at reading the report of this fabulous overland expedition through Canada up to Great Slave Lake, Artillery Lake, and on up to the Great Fish River, which today is generally called Back's River. This river, which flows into the Arctic Sea, is frozen 10 to 11 months of the year and had never before been visited by a white man. Along the way, Back observed more than 160 years before the Surgeon General of the U.S. that a considerable number of northern Indians had cancer of the mouth, which he presumed came from their constant chewing of tobacco. Among the many interesting events was that several of his junior officers were contemplating a duel over the affections of a beautiful young Indian woman known as Green Stockings. I recently read that a prominent family in Vancouver traced its ancestry to one of Back's officers and the beauteous Green Stockings. It was a fascinating book, and before long, I was acquiring more books on Arctic exploration, and, later, Antarctic material. Like many adult males, I still have a lot of "little boy" in me and have a voracious appetite for reading stories on exploration, hunting, and adventure.

Mercator's arctic is a fine example of what the very best 16th Century cartographer could do when depicting a relatively unknown region. Then there was no expectation – as there is not now — that mapmakers have first-hand knowledge of every feature they depicted. It was understood that one used the best information that one could get from the most reliable sources available. On this map, Mercator acknowledges the 1553-54 voyage of Sir Hugh Willoughby, with an island labeled "Sir Hugo Willoghbes land" (although Willoughby's efforts to sail to China ended in death in a frozen bay in Lapland). "Novaya Zemlya" (Russian for "New Land") had been known since Viking times, and late 16th Century navigators thought that if they could just get past the ice that often surrounded it, the coast would be clear all the way to China. For the regions around the North Pole, Mercator relied on a second- or third-hand account of a 14th Century Oxford friar who apparently traveled as far as Greenland. That friar (who may have been one Nicholas of Lynn) said that the polar area was surrounded by four large islands separated by narrow "indrawing seas." At the pole itself, these seas converged in a maelstrom in which was the pole itself, a "high, black rock," according to Mercator's map. On the island to the southeast, he locates "pygmies, four feet tall, who are called Skraelings in Greenland," a clear reference to Eskimo peoples. Mercator's own experiments with a compass in the Low Countries had proven that the earth's magnetic pole was not the same as the geographic pole, and he marks it here at the north end of the "Strait of Anian," separating Asia from America.

- Robert W. Karrow

The great age of polar exploration literally died with WW I, and the later explorers had the advantage of aircraft, radios, snowmobiles, the Global Positioning System, and better equipment of all sorts. For many years I had hoped to visit the high Arctic, and in 1991 I took a marvelous trip by air, which started on Baffin Island, where Frobisher thought he had found gold — it was fool's gold — and which took me as high as the northwest coast of Ellesmore Island to the weather station Eureka at 80 degrees north, 690 miles from the North Pole. Along the way, I visited the graves of three of Sir John Franklin's sailors at Beechey Island. Today adventurous types can go all the way to the North Pole by airplane (the Canadian government makes certain there is a second plane with you in case of a mishap) or visit the Antarctic Peninsula and fly over the South Pole.

The casual reader would be surprised to find out how much material has been written in a variety of languages on the polar regions. I spent many months identifying my collection by means of the Arctic bibliography, Spence, and the OCLC. Ultimately, my collection of Arctic and Antarctic material became larger than any of my other collections, which include Americana, voyages and travel, general and military history, banking and economics, atlases and maps, Africa and sports, and celestial material.

Occasionally one is asked who were the most important polar explorers. This is not an easy question to answer. One could, however, say who was the luckiest. That would be Captain Sir William Edward Perry, who took several trips from the British Isles through the Arctic channels, pushing our knowledge of the Arctic farther and farther to the West. For decades after, those

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Caxtonian

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Musings...

Nathaniel Hawthorne has been on my mind lately. He is one of the people of literature with whom I would love to have spent an afternoon. We would have shaken hands warmly, I would have looked into his dark and probing eyes, and we would have talked about his remarkable tales and of our mutual inheritances of Puritanism. His wife Sophia would have served us tea, and, as the sun set behind the Berkshires, we would have bade each other goodbye as I found my way back to Boston for my flight to Chicago.

But I have had to depend upon the realities within the house of literature to know and understand the genius of this early storyteller, whose preoccupation with the legacy of our Puritan roots continues to inform our society in remarkable ways. After reading nearly all of his tales and novels in 1962, I followed Hawthorne's footsteps through New England, visiting the sites he had known and from which he created such tales as "The Ambitious Guest," "The Great Stone Face," and *The House of Seven Gables.*

His singularly magnificent masterpiece, *The Scarlet Letter*, it seems to me, provides a most enduring commentary upon contemporary American culture, in both character and theme. Set in very early New England, the novel is the touching tale of grief ensuing from sexual indiscretions by the spiritual leader of the community and a beautiful woman who had wandered into his parish with an unknown background. Because she could not conceal her guilt — or the child of their liaison, impish little Pearl, for whom Hester paid a great price — Hester was marked for life with an ornate scarlet "A" worn on her bodice. She became the embodiment of the first "single mom" in our literature — and a fine example she was. The father, the Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale, for whom the cost of confession was more than he would pay, cloaked in secrecy the truth of his circumstance from all but Hester and one other. Only in death do we see his own scarlet "A," etched mysterious upon his flesh. His revelation comes through the anguished probing of Roger Chillingworth, our literature's first "accusing jury."

Ever so delicately, Hawthorne revealed through the lives of these characters crucial truths of the human condition. Through Hester we see both the pain and the power of revelation as she lived courageously among those who imposed upon her the torments of ostracism. In spite of attempts to destroy her because of sin, she transformed in her lifetime the meaning of the "A" from Adultery to Angel as she lived her days in seclusion and service. This first great heroine of our literature is the embodiment of one who, in losing her innocence — as all, at some time and in some way, must — is not destroyed. Through Dimmesdale, we see the emblazoned scourge of deceit and hypocrisy, in spite of a life of public religious proclamations. Through Chillingworth we see hatred and revenge in their most destructive forms.

Puritanism is alive and well in America. It still demands first, revelation, and then, punishment; it seldom extends forgiveness. Beyond the institutional Puritanism of our society, which may be our heaviest burden as a people, Hawthorne illumined a humaneness of spirit among his countrymen making possible restitution through a contrite heart in a life of service to humankind. This more generous aspect of our spiritual heritage, it seems to me, lives in a national magnanimity of soul that rebuilds enemy nations after war, that extends full equality to citizens of the most remarkable diversity, that perpetually fulfills the promise of democracy in spite of tyrannies of all sorts.

Through the legends of America, among which *The Scarlet Letter* stands as one of our greatest, we begin to understand the truth behind the words engraved upon the tombstone marking the two graves of the lovers: *"ON A FIELD, SABLE, THE LETTER A, GULES."*

Robert Cotner
Editor

Book-Hunting in the Arctic – the Faroe Islands

Part I of III

For reasons that I still don't quite understand, I began to be intrigued about 10 years ago with remote and inaccessible islands of the North American continent, in the North Atlantic. Perhaps it was only an early mid-life crisis. Or, perhaps it was the result of holidays on Canada's Pelee Island, Mackinac Island, and that most beautiful and restorative island, Bermuda. There things stood for some time, but gradually my interests, my reading, my collecting, and my travels took me farther and farther north – even to the desolate shores of Hudson Bay – and closer to the footsteps of the Vikings and their incredible saga of exploration across the Atlantic 500 years before Columbus.

Last summer I spent some time tracing part of that ancient route – from the Faroe Islands to Iceland to Greenland. I can't claim to have suffered any privations, such as those that the magnificent Norse mariners did. But I did learn a great deal about the peoples who inhabit this little-known and seldom-reported corner of the world. I'd like to share with *Caxtonian* readers in this and the next two issues something of their past and present, as I came to know it in a summer's "Book Hunting in the Artic."

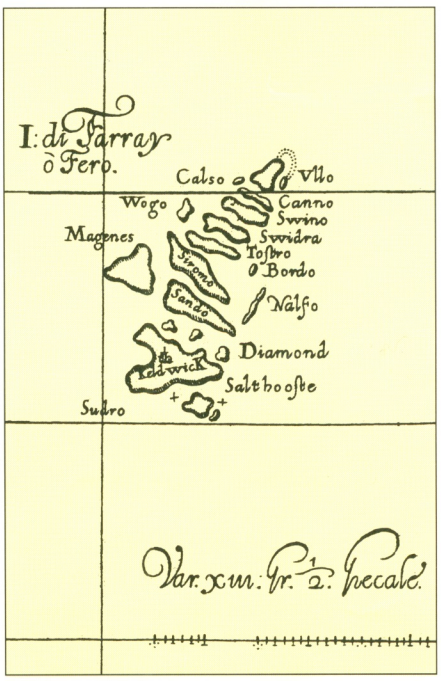
Of the three places that I visited, I suppose the Faroe Islands are the least known. Situated in the storm-tossed North Atlantic, halfway between Norway and Iceland, their 18 volcanic, mountainous islands are home to some 40,000 people and 80,000 sheep. The people are the descendants of the ancient Norse and Celtic settlers and are today almost entirely dependent upon fishing and sheep farming for their subsistence. And although located just 400 miles from the northern shores of Scotland, this self-governing community within the kingdom of Denmark is seldom thought about by either Britons or continental Europeans.

Isolated by geography and by one of the world's most unpredictable weather systems, the Faroes' culture has survived almost intact from Medieval times. Modern technology lives side-by-side with their rich, if comparatively unknown, literary heritage.

Of course, the principal problem with the Faroes is that it can be damnably difficult to

A copy of the "Sheep Letters" (1298) in the Faroese National Archives. (Photo by and from the collection of Glen W. Wiche.)

get there. Neither transport by sea nor by air is a sure bet. The ocean currents around the islands are among the most treacherous in the Northern hemisphere, and crossings from both Scotland and Denmark are rough, even in the summer months. Flying is quicker but also has its drawbacks, for fog can cut off the airport for days at a time. My own experience was typical. Arriving after a pleasant two-hour flight from Reykjavik, we were informed that the airport was closed because of fog. After circling the shrouded terrain for another hour, we finally made our approach between two uncomfortably close mountains and onto the shortest landing strip in Europe, coming in on what I can only



The Faroe Islands, from Sir Robert Dudley, 1646. (Used through the courtesy of the Fitzgerald Collection, the Newberry Library.)

describe as a hard-brake landing with tires smoking. The British soldiers who occupied the Faroes during World War II referred to the islands as the "isles of maybe" because of the always-unpredictable weather. And I quite understood when, 10 days later, it took me 40 hours to make what should have been another pleasant two-hour flight back to Reykjavik.

I had arrived in Torshawn, the capital of the Faroes, just in time for the great national day, the Olav-Soka, July 29. A celebration of the adaptation of Christianity in the islands, the holiday also marks the official opening of Parliament and is celebrated with parades, concerts, sporting events, and art exhibitions. It is also the one day in the year when everyone, down to the smallest Faroe boy and girl, dons the traditional national costume in a wonderfully colorful burst of national pride and patriotism. This two-day (sometimes stretching into three) holiday also features the consumption of an *immense* quantity of alcohol, mostly the ubiquitous and extraordinarily potent Brennivin.

The highlight of the Olav-Soka are the famous chain dances. Once popular all over medieval Europe, chain dancing was later supplanted by folk dancing, and exists only in its original form in the Faroes. Here the ancient heroic ballads, some consisting of several hundred verses, are chanted to a simple but powerful dance step as everyone links arms and moves to and fro in a circular motion. As the circles grow too large for the dance halls, they move into the streets, join with other circles of dancers, until finally the whole of central Torshavn is alive with one immense human chain, their words and footsteps echoing in unison against the rock-strewn basaltic cliffs, as they have through the millennia. The dancers start at midnight and go right through the night until five or six o'clock in the morning. It was a unique experience, and I have often thought to myself since, that I really did reach out that night and touch the Medieval world.

For such a miniscule society, the Faroes have been the subject of a surprising number of books. I first became interested in the literary history of the place when I discovered that a copy of the first history of the Faroes was contained in the library of that ever-curious

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Polar Books

(Continued from Page One)

channels were frozen, and history could not be repeated. The unluckiest may have been Captain Sir John Franklin, who got trapped in the polar ice and thought it would ultimately thaw out and free his ship. It did not, and by the time his weak and starving crew tried to reach the Arctic shore, it was too late, and they all perished.

On leadership, I am under the impression that Sir Ernest Shackleton was the greatest leader of all, and Roald Armundsen was close behind. Shackleton, who suffered a number of misfortunes, never lost a man — something few other polar explorers could say. He once got within 100 miles of the South Pole, but turned back because he feared for the lives of his companions.

The most exciting book I've read on polar explorations is Alfred Lansing's *Endurance*, about Shackleton's 1914 expedition, during which his ship was crushed in the Antarctic ice, and he saved all his people only by the most extraordinary of heroic efforts. It's a story every person interested in leadership should read. Amundsen was prepared better than any other explorer, and his feats of being the first through the Northwest Passage and the first to the South Pole are living proofs of his intelligence, skill, willingness to sacrifice, and infinite attention to detail.

To this day, Captain Robert Falcon Scott is a greater hero in Britain than Shackleton or Amundsen, who spent their entire lives practicing in the harsh winters of mountainous Norway. However, I heard a story once that has colored my view of Scott ever since. During a trip to London, John Maggs, managing director of Maggs Brothers, Berkeley Square, arranged for a meeting with Peter Wordie, son of the famous explorer, scholar, and president of the Royal Geographic Society, Sir James Mann Wordie, who was second in command on Elephant Island. This meeting allowed me to acquire his father's fantastic Arctic and Antarctic working-map collection. Peter Wordie told me when he was a young boy, he overheard Sir Raymond Priestley while visiting his father, Sir James, say that the explorer Albert B. Armitage, second in command of Scott's first expedition, had commented to Scott that he thought they should practice with the use of skis and dogs while waiting for the Antarctic summer. Scott replied with disdain, "Gentlemen don't practice."

My opinion of these polar pioneers is summed up in a statement by Sir Edmund Hillary: "For organization and scientific discovery, give me Scott; for speed and efficiency of travel, give me Amundsen; but when disaster strikes and all hope is gone, get down on your knees and pray for Shackleton."

Gerald F. Fitzgerald

The Gerald F. Fitzgerald Polar Collection consists of almost 800 books, 300 hundred maps, and two dozen paintings, drawings, and artifacts. All the important accounts of discovery and exploration from the 18th Century to the mid-20th Century are included. Some highlights include the 1633 account of The Strange and Dangerovs Voyage of Captaine Thomas James, in his intended Discovery of the Northwest Passage into the South Sea, *which fully related* The Miseries indured both Going, Wintering, Returning; and the Rarities observed, both Philosophicall and Mathematicall*; a series of letters about Antarctic expeditions between Robert Falcon Scott, Edward Shackleton, Douglas Mawson, Edward A. Wilson, and Sir Archibald Geikie; and one of 50 copies of the first book printed in Antarctica, the* Aurora Australis *of 1907. Maps in the Fitzgerald Collection range from the earliest 16th Century speculations about the polar regions to 20th Century topographic maps of Antarctica. Included are an important series of maps, manuscript and printed, which belonged to Sir James Wordie, Scottish geologist and explorer, who served with Shackleton in the Antarctic and on expeditions to Greenland, Spitsbergen, and the Canadian Arctic. Among the artifacts are oil paintings by James Hamilton, a rare series of photographs of relics from the Franklin Expedition, Captain Scott's dress sword, and Admiral Byrd's mukluks.*

- Robert W. Karrow

Author's note: No collection of a specialized nature can be put together without the help of a number of people – dealers and others – alert to one's collection and happy to accommodate. Particular thanks is owed to the aforementioned John Maggs and his staff; Bernard Quarich, London; Don Lake, Toronto; J. Pratt West Side Books, Ann Arbor, MI; Jean and Jerome Parmer, San Diego, CA; Bob Finch, High Latitude, Bainbridge, WA; Hamill & Barker, Evanston, IL; the late Van Allen Bradley; Patrick McGahern, Ottawa; Francis Edwards, London; Bauman Rare Books, Philadelphia, PA; Branner's, Copenhagen; William Reece, New Haven, CT; and Gaston Renard, Australia. I am also grateful to Caxtonians Mary Beth Beal and Harry Stern, who guided me and appraised my collection.

Like all collectors, one of the serious limitations is the funds available at any given time. Had I as much money in my youth as I now have, the collection would be considerably larger. I am particularly endebted to David C. White and Patrick Morris for their putting academic order in the forthcoming catalog descriptions, to Betty Marsh for doing all the word processing, and to Caxtonian Robert W. Karrow, Jr., who edited the catalog and encouraged me to present the collection to the Newberry Library.

Book-Hunting

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bibliophile, Samuel Pepys. That work was Lucas Debes' *Description of the Islands and Inhabitants of Foeroe*. Debes served as the provost of the churches of the Faroes for many years, and when his history was published in London in 1676 it attracted considerable attention. It remains a remarkably lively and literate work. Three centuries later, I found it indespensable for an understanding of the natural, geological, and human history of this deceptively complicated little world.

One of the islands' best loved 20th Century men of letters, Jorgen-Frantz Jacobsen, portrayed life and love in 18th Century Faroe in his memorable novel *Barbara*. There are still comparatively few English translations of Faroese literature, but fortunately I had

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Book-Hunting

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obtained a fine English version of Jacobsen's book. It is one of those remarkable evocations of place and time. I have held it close to my heart since first reading it, in much the same way that lovers of Dublin cherish the works of James Joyce. The story of a thrice-wed Barbara was taken from surviving 18th Century Faroese court records and is also loosely based upon the author's own unrequited love affair. A newspaper correspondent, Jacobsen wrote *Barbara* during the last four years of his tragically short life. When he died of tuberculosis in 1938 at the age of 38, his distant cousin and fellow novelist William Heinesen completed the book and saw it through the press. It quickly became a Nordic classic. Much of the novel takes place in the old quarter of Torshavn.

During my stay I was able to leisurely explore the crooked lanes and the 18th Century buildings that Jacobsen so meticulous and lovingly described. I found a closeness with the characters who live in his powerful book. Perhaps nowhere was this more evident than when I visited the old woman who owns the superbly preserved 17th Century cottage, "Kavalio," which Jacobsen used as the model for his heroine's home.

Barbara has recently been made into a motion picture by the Danish director Niels Malmros, who shot it in the Faroes. It has opened to great critical acclaim in Denmark and in the islands.

With all of this attention to his book, I decided to seek out Jacobsen's grave. I finally found it, untended and in a neglected corner of the city's oldest cemetery, and I placed flowers on the last resting place of this creative and gentle soul. So too, for his kinsman, William Heinesen. He lived into his 90s and only recently died. Heinesen was perhaps more esteemed as a novelist outside of his own country than at home and was seriously considered as a nominee for the Nobel Prize for Literature, until he withdrew his name from consideration.

Among his works is a fine novel based upon the life of Lucas Debes, *Det God Hab (The Good Hope)*, which has yet to appear in English. I did find a fine Faroese edition, which until I find a teacher of Faroese, I shall be deprived of reading.

The Faroese language is closely related to West Nortwegian and Icelandic. It nearly died out as a written language, for during the long years of direct Danish rule, it was looked upon as a "peasant dialect," and Danish was the official language of the islands.

It was not until the late 19th Century, when V.U. Hammershaimb created a new Faroese orthography that written Faroese was reborn. This made it possible to collect the ancient songs, ballads, and poems in the native language of the islands, which, in turn, led to the rise of Faroese nationalism in the early years of the 20th Century.

Dust wrapper of Wiliam Heinesen's Det God Hab (The Good Hope). *(From the Collection of Glen W. Wiche.)*

Today the Faroes boast of several newspapers and magazines, and Jacobsen's Bookshop remains one of the social and intellectual centers of Torshavn. Here one can find a fine selection of both new and antiquarian books on the North Atlantic, in Faroese and other languages. Close by, at the beautiful Torshavn Cathedral, one now finds Bibles and prayer books in the native tongue. Never narrowly partisan, virtually all the kind and hospitable Faroese also speak Danish and some English.

Refreshingly, a thorough knowledge of one's heritage in the Faroes is simply assumed to be an essential part of good citizenship. The principal reason for this is the surprising number of educational and cultural institutions that are so strongly supported in the islands. It is rather remarkable, I think, that over a dozen museums, academic institutions, and art galleries are flourishing in a country whose total population is less than half that of Naperville, IL. The Faroese National Archives were established in 1932 and contained certain records dating back as far as the year 1298. Among its treasures is the parchment manuscript known as the "Sheep Letter," which consists of laws relating to the raising of sheep and other agricultural matters, and the records of the Faroese Parliament, which date from 1615. The 16,000 running feet of shelf space is cared for by an enthusiastic staff of seven. The National Library (founded in 1829) collects everything printed in the Faroes as well as much material printed abroad that pertains to the islands. The efficient staff of 12 was especially helpful to this foreign researcher, despite some inevitable linguistic barriers. Also nearby is the Historical Museum, which began in 1898. Now beautifully housed in a new building overlooking Torshavn, the museum does a superb job in exhibiting both cultural and archeological artifacts. Among its treasures are copies of the early Danish prayer books and sermons, which were widely read in the Faroes. A fine example, Brochmand's sermons of 1764, was published in Copenhagen and imported for use in the Faroes' churches.

With so many cultures being diluted and dying out, it is refreshing to see this kind of renaissance. One observer of Faroese remarked that they had created a fair haven on the windy edge of nothing, and I'm inclined to agree.

To Be Continued

Glen W. Wiche

Editor's Note: Caxtonian Glen Wiche, antiquarian book seller, collector of books on Restoration England, the Civil War, and islands of the Atlantic, and world traveler, presented this three-part article at the Caxton Luncheon, February 13, 1998.

Caxtonian Ralph Newman Fondly Remembered at Memorial Service

Editor's note: The late Ralph Newman, Caxtonian for 56 years and Lincoln specialist, was eulogized by his two daughters at the August 2nd memorial service held in the Chicago Cultural Center. We thought is appropriate to share the two presentations given at the time to the more than 200 guests who gathered to honor Mr. Newman.

Some of what I remember when I look back on growing up are excursions to historical societies with father, lessons from Abraham Lincoln for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, father at age 43 eloquently celebrating Lincoln's birthday on Ed Murrow's "Person to Person," allowing a gawky 14-year-old to be on TV for the first time, and endless trips to New Salem, IL, which seemed to me an almost holy place.

Although I secretly read comic books, all of my bookshelves were filled with history books for children. Father encouraged this very young teen even to write book reviews of these "landmark" books, and somehow he even got them published!

We grew up in a house where Lincoln was always watching us and guiding our thoughts and behavior, in a home where there was not such thing as prejudice, where everyone father knew and introduced us to was indeed created equal. He helped instill in us a responsibility to oppose injustice and the wrongs in society that has driven me with a passion throughout my life.

But one of the fondest memories is of father bringing "Uncle Carl" Sandburg to our house in Oak Park, and my sitting on his knee or lying on the floor while he sang and played the guitar.

I believe the following words of Sandburg's express so well what we feel about father this day:

Let Love Go On
by Carl Sandburg

Let it go on; let the love of this hour be poured out till all the answers
are made, the last dollar spent and the last blood gone.
Time runs with an ax and a hammer, time slides down the hallways with
a pass-key and a master-key, and time gets buy, time wins.
Let the love of this hour go on; let all the oaths and children and people
of this love be clean as a washed stone under a waterfall in the sun.
Time in a young man with ballplayer legs, time runs a winning race
against life and the clocks, time tickles with rust and spots.
Let love go on; the heartbeats are measured out with a measuring glass,
so many apiece to gamble with, to use and spend and reckon; let love go on.

Carol Fox Parry

Another Memory . . .

Whenever I am with friends and we talk about growing up and what each of our childhoods were like, my account never duplicates or is even similar to those of my friends. It was a unique childhood: not the typical family activities and outings such as picnics, playing games, and block parties. Instead, thanks to father, we had an amazing range of rich and stimulating adventures:

*vacations at Hayworth, WI, with Mike and Petty Lebold, skeet shooting, visiting the deer park, playing with their Labrador retrievers;
*traveling to Gary, IN, to a war bond rally with Carl Sandburg, Bill Mauldin, and Edna Ferber;
*weekends at Carl Sandburg's farm on the lower Michigan penisula milking goats;
*Saturdays at 16 N. Michigan Ave. and the 18 E. Chestnut St. bookshops, attending book autograph parties with prominent authors;
*college weekends at Carl Haverlin's home in Bronxville, NY, where the grocery inventory consisted primarily of imported cocktail snacks and gin (thank goodness for the gourmet deli in the village that delivered!);
*serving as a page at the 1952 Republican Convention, when Eisenhower beat Taft for the nomination, and then a few weeks later having a job at the Democratic Convention, when Adlai Stevenson won the nomination;
*being able to produce the best history reports and papers in my class because we lived with the best sources – a father who provided access to endless reference materials and information (and continued to do this for my daughters);
*coming home from a high school basketball game in the evening with my friends and finding Carl Sandburg holding court in the solarium – and Carl and father then proceeding to spend an hour enchanting me and my friends with riddles and word games.

Overlaying all of these unique experiences was the presence of books and history. We had so many books in our home and were encouraged to read them all. I remember once as a young teenager malingering for a few extra days at home while recovering from the flu so I could finish reading Upton Sinclair's series of Lannie Budd books I had begun during my illness.

The adventures continued for my daughters Suzanne and Cynthia. During a trip to Chicago to visit their grandfather, their activities included a VIP tour of the Museum of Science and Industry, which started with a private lunch for three: a seven-year-old, an 11-year-old, and the President of the Museum in his office.

However, as a grandfather, father also displayed some of the traditional behavior for indulging his grandchildren. My husband Dick and I will never forget the time a delivery truck arrived at our house in Buffalo, NY, and unloaded endless cartons filled with toys from Grandpa Ralph. We had to stash them in the basement before the children saw them, and rationed them out over a couple of years, both for our children and as birthday gifts for their friends.

Father also had the opportunity last summer when visiting his great-grandson in Denver, CO, to read him a bedtime story; and with father that meant learning, so every few minutes he would ask Kurt, "What does that mean? Let's discuss that idea." The memory of his great-grandfather sharing books with Kurt is a precious one. I am so sorry he didn't have a similar opportunity to share his love of books and knowledge with his new great-granddaughters Maria and Sarah. But he would be happy to know that there are already many books in the nursery.

In a letter father wrote me in 1959 he said "...beginning March 1st and every Sunday thereafter, I shall be doing a column for the Trib and their syndicate, under the title (this subject to change) 'Answers in Americana.' I shall discuss the unusual aspects of American life and history. Present plans even call for the public to be invited to send in queries...." He was truly thrilled with being able to share his passion for history with such a broad audience.

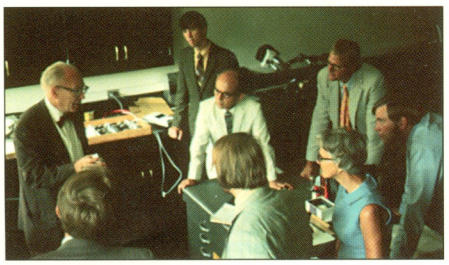
Father created that unique and often-sought ideal of combining his avocation and his vocation – so the line between the two was not only blurred; it didn't exist. He truly loved his work. And we admired and respected his enthusiasm – something we his children and grandchildren have tried to emulate in our professional and community roles.

Maxine Brandenburg

A Cruise in Time and Spirit Into Maryland's Early History

A map is a metaphor: it is a miniature, graphic representation of what the world or a portion of the world is like in terms and in forms quite different from reality. In preparation for a tour aboard a 34-foot sloop on Maryland's St. Mary's River in 1970, Malcolm Jackson, curator of marine navigation at the Smithsonian Institution told his crew, among which I was numbered, "I remember being told in World War II, while cruising in the Pacific with the U.S. Navy, that a certain island was located 'at about this spot. We don't know for sure but we think this map represents fairly accurately where it is.' You never know for certain about maps," he said

As one of three directors of an archeological dig for the Smithsonian Institution at the site of the fourth colonial settlement of St. Mary's City (1634), I was working with former Caxtonian Harold Skramstad, course instructor and assistant director at the Smithsonian, and fellow graduate student Tim Rockwell. It was to be a one-time experience for a select few students in an intensive study of early American culture. We had organized a summer-long course to give six students an experience in what life would have been like in Maryland's Colonial days, when the first Europeans came



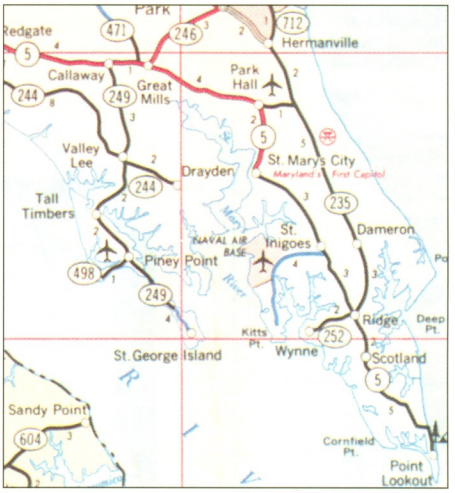
Students have a rare, behind-the-scenes visit to a conservatiion laboratory at the Smithsonian Institution. Former Caxtonian Harold Skramstad is in the light blue suit, right. (Photo by Robert Cotner.)

to St. Mary's City, led by Leonard Calvert, the third Lord Baltimore. Early in the session, we wanted them to get a sense of what the discovery of the site might have been like for the first European settlers. We arranged for Jackson to sail with our students up the St. Mary's River from the Chesapeake Bay. Students thus experienced first-hand what those coming in the two English ships, the *Ark*, a 300-ton vessel, and the *Dove*, a 50-ton companion ship used for more shallow waters, such as the St. Mary's River, experienced as they first sighted, and then landed at, Colonial Maryland.

"Skram" had arranged to use his father-in-law's 14-foot Boston whaler for backup, as students sailed aboard the sloop. After dropping the students off at the Colonial site,

The Smithsonian's curator of Marine Navigation, Malcolm Jackson, sails with students aboard his 34-foot sloop up the St. Mary's River toward St. Mary's City in 1970. (Photo by Robert Cotner.)

we directors went to Jackson's pier near the mouth of the St. Mary's River in preparation for taking the whaler back to its mooring near Tall Timbers on the Potomac River. We watched a dark storm cloud move toward us up the river, and Jackson warned, "I wouldn't go if I were you." But Skram's Scandanavian blood and youthful bravado drove him to reply, "We'll be all right," and the three of us boarded the whaler and headed down the river toward Piney Point — and into the storm. I sat in front of the windshield of the boat, but the waves became so violent and the concussions so great as they smacked the hull of the small craft that I moved to a position behind Skram, who piloted the boat. The waves became higher than the bulwarks and drenched us as they broke over the bow. Skram moved to the back of the pilot's chair with his feet on the seat — better to see the



A contemporary Maryland State Road Commission map (1968) shows location of first Maryland capital, St. Mary's City, and other sites.

destination on the other side of the river. If we had turned sideways to the dark, turbulent waves, we'd have capsized; if we headed directly into them, we'd have been totally awash. Skram, in a masterful exhibition of navigation, kept the boat at 45-degrees to the surging tide as we bobbed and heaved like driftwood in the gale-force wind. I didn't worry until Skram looked back toward Jackson's pier and murmured to himself, "It's too late to turn back." He then said, "Better get the life jackets on, guys." The usual 20-minute cruise took more than an hour before we landed, weary, on the far shore.

On the map, we covered less than an inch of placid, pale blue ink between fine black lines marking coastal shore. In reality, however, we made a turbulent passage through a night-dark storm of furious winds and roiling waters. We all came to understand something not in the summer's course syllabus — but that should have been: the presence in the days of exploration of an inner-directedness within the human spirit necessary to survive an alien environment. This, in addition to the discipline and individual courage, stand as the greatest discoveries of the age of exploration, when gallant people in fragile ships sailed the Earth's oceans, often isolated and lost. A map is indeed a flimsy metaphor providing little comfort and even less safety for the sea-weary voyager.

Robert Cotner

Book Marks

Luncheon Programs

Your Special Luncheon Invitation. . .

Date: November 13, 1998
Place: Mid-Day Club
Speaker: Kenneth H. Patterson

Caxtonian Kenneth H. Paterson, who has informed us in writing of his recent trip to Cuba, will give an illustrated talk to Caxtonians and friends, which he is calling, "A Scot's Perspective on Cuba." He will take us to this island nation, off-limits for Americans for many years now, and introduce us to people of books who maintain a constant preoccuation with the printed word.

We will, as well, see such sights as Morro Castle, lying at the entrance to Havana Harbor, meet Ernest Hemingway's pilot, Gregorio Fuentes, and get a sense of the continuing vitality of a nation often maligned in the American press and forgotten by a once-friendly neighbor.

Paterson, a sailor, a writer, and an inveterate traveler who seldom meets a stranger, will be a splendid tour-guide for the luncheon program. We will see *Pilar*, Hemingway's fishing boat, we will see the statue of Hemingway near the harbor at Cojimar created by fishermen who donated ships' propellor to create the bust of the great American novelist, and we will visit with Paterson Hemingway's Cuban home, Finca Vigia, preserved as it was the day Hemingway last left it in 1960.

Caxtonians who read the past three issues of the Caxtonian have a foretaste of what is coming in this program. The pleasure will be to hear our resident Scot tell his many stories in his own special way.

Edward Quattrocchi
Leonard Freedman
Co-Chairs

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 at 5 p.m., dinner at 6 p.m., lecture at 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 $6. 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.

Dinner Programs

Your Special Dinner Invitation. . .

Date: November 18, 1998
Place: Mid-Day Club
Speaker: Michael Dirda

The book, for every book deserves a definite article, is not simply a cover with text enclosed. It is composed of many splendors and many parts — the theme, its wording, the printing, illustrations, binding (the list goes on). But finally, this package called "book" reaches an end with the reviewer, as the *arbiter elegantiae.*

All of us quickly scan (and sometimes read) those book review sections now present in virtually every American newspaper, magazine, and, yes, even television programs. But who selects books for review — and why? What are the criteria used? And what about the juggling act between reviewer and publisher, between reviewer and author?

For more than 20 years Michael Dirda has written reviews for *The Washington Post*, worked as an editor and essayist for *Book World*, and contributed annually to *Collier's Encyclopedia* and *The World Book Encyclopedia*, in addition to other writing activities.

A native of Ohio, Dirda attended Oberlin College, received a Fulbright Scholarship to France (Marsceilles), and followed this with graduate work at Cornell University. One of his books, *Caring for Your Books,* was selected by the Book-of-the-Month Club for distribution. In 1993 he was awarded a Pulitzer Prize in criticism.

Dirda, his wife, an art conservator formerly at the Library of Congress and now at the National Archives, three sons, and "too many" books, the accumulations of so many reviews, reside in Silver Spring, MD.

Dirda will present the inside story in that little-known realm of book reviewing. Join Caxtonian friends as we welcome him to Chicago and hear him speak on "Being Paid to Read: Books, Reviewing, and Life at *The Washington Post's Book World.*"

C. Fred Kittle
Vice President and
Program Chair