



# Caxtonian

Journal of The Caxton Club of Chicago

Volume VII, No. 8

August 1999

## Donnelley's 1930 Production of Thoreau's *Walden* Is Among the Finest

By Claire Badaracco

*Editor's Note:* In 1930, Chicago's R.R. Donnelley & Sons Co., under the leadership of William Kittredge (1891-1945), head of Donnelley's department of design and typography, produced one of the finest printed versions of Henry David Thoreau's *Walden* that has been printed. *Caxtonian* Claire Badaracco told the story of this and three associated volumes produced by Donnelley at the same time in *American Culture* and the *Marketplace* (Library of Congress, 1992). Below is the opening chapter of that book, used through special arrangement with the Library of Congress. The illustrations in this issue by Rudolph Ruzicka, from woodcuts done for the Donnelley *Walden*, are from the original art, collected by the late *Caxtonian* Gaylord Donnelley and now in the Wing Collection of the Newberry Library. They are used through the courtesy of the R.R. Donnelley & Sons Co. and the Newberry Library.

Between 1926 and 1930 the commercial printing, advertising, journalism, and mass market magazine trades were booming. In Chicago alone, printing houses employed an unprecedented number of printers who produced thousands of brochures, broadsides, journals, and posters daily in a half dozen major plants, according to the city's statistics. As their European counterparts had for decades, mass market consumers in America came to expect that advertisements and commercial ephemera would be beautifully printed. For a business printer, a commercial copywriter, or a graphic illustrator, the public eye was the final arbiter of market value. What one wrote, drew, or designed had to be sufficiently nouveau for New York, sufficiently well-bred for Boston, and classical enough for London. Out of this commercial circumstance came the cultural paradox of the period: fine printing techniques were applied to mass market publicity ephemera, products of what is termed the low culture, while books, generally regarded as part of the more permanent, definitive, or high culture, were mass produced without the same regard for quality.

### Walden OR LIFE IN THE WOODS

BY HENRY DAVID THOREAU

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY  
RAYMOND W. ADAMS

ILLUSTRATED BY RUDOLPH RUZICKA



CHICAGO  
THE LAKESIDE PRESS  
1930

*Title page for Walden, or Life in the Woods by Henry David Thoreau with woodcuts by Rudolph Ruzicka (Chicago: The Lakeside Press, 1930).*

One of the country's largest commercial printers of the day was the family-operated firm of R.R. Donnelley & Sons Company, founded in 1864. The Donnelley company was a commercial printer which manufactured catalogs, broadsides, booklets, newsletters, and other publicity ephemera "by the trainload." Among Donnelley's main clients were Sears, Roebuck & Co., Montgomery Ward, and Marshall Field's. The Lakeside Press handled commercial books, printing the Chicago city directory, telephone books, and the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.

To take advantage of the burgeoning mass market appetite for popular books, the company initiated a public relations campaign in 1925 designed to get the attention of mass market book publishers and attract new business, assert the high product quality of the American printing industry in the United States and abroad, and foster

company morale. R.R. Donnelley's "Four American Books" campaign established the company in the public mind as well as in the industry as one with taste, skill, know-how, and ambition.

The Four American Books were Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*, illustrated by Rockwell Kent; the *Tales of Edgar Allan Poe*, illustrated by W. A. Dwiggins; *Walden*, by Henry David Thoreau, with illustrations by Rudolph Ruzicka; and Richard Henry Dana's *Two Years Before the Mast*, illustrated by Edward A. Wilson. The campaign's influence extended to improving U.S. book production standards by demonstrating that large machinery could achieve fine impressions for books, giving them the appearance of books that had been typeset by hand. Not only were the Four American Books influential in the publishing industry, but so, too, were the printed advertisements in the book marketing industry. The Four Books campaign prospectus, direct

mail pieces, trade advertisements, and public exhibit scheme established an influential precedent for the marketing of books in the United States during the thirties. The advertisement style and copy, typeface, design, and layout of brochures were widely imitated, particularly by George Macy and Bennett Cerf. More broadly, the campaign asserted the value of integrity of modern American culture by linking the production of carefully manufactured printed goods to the indigenous works produced by nineteenth-century American authors.

The history of the Four Books campaign detailed in [*American Culture and the Marketplace*] illustrates how

(See DONNELLEY, Page Four)



# Caxtonian

The Caxton Club  
Founded 1895



President - Karen A. Skubish  
Vice-President - C. Frederick Kittle  
Secretary - Susan R. Hanes  
Treasurer - Christopher D. Oakes  
Historian - Frank J. Piehl  
Archivist - Brother Michael Grace, S J  
Past President - Thomas J. Joyce

## Council

### Class of 1999

Abel Berland  
John P. Chalmers  
Kim Coventry  
William Drendel  
Gene Hotchkiss, III

### Class of 2000

Edward C. Hirschland  
Robert W. Karrow  
Kenneth H. Paterson  
John S. Railing  
Peggy Sullivan

### Class of 2001

Leonard Freedman  
J. Ingrid Lesley  
Lynn Martin  
Barbara Lazarus Metz  
James S. Tomes



## Friday Luncheon Program

Chair - Edward Quattrocchi  
Co-Chair - Leonard Freedman

Secy - Bookkeeper - Dan Crawford  
Webmaster - Paul Baker  
<http://www.caxtonclub.org>



## Journal Staff

Founder/Editor - Robert Cotner  
Associate Editor - Michael Braver  
Copy Editor - Charles Shields

The *Caxtonian* is published monthly by The Caxton Club. The Caxton Club office is located in The Newberry Library, at 60 West Walton Street, Chicago, IL 60610. Telephone 312/255-3710. Permission to reprint material from the *Caxtonian* is not necessary if copy of reprint is mailed to The Caxton Club office and credit is given to the *Caxtonian*.

The *Caxtonian* is printed by  
River Street Press, Aurora, Illinois  
Fine Printers & Lithographers

# Musings...

Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862) and I have been old friends since I first opened *Walden* 30 years ago and could not put it down until I had read and annotated it. I hold *Walden* to be one of the very select *necessary* books that every American should choose to read sometime in his or her lifetime. Although I have felt somewhat solitary in my personal devotion to Thoreau over the years, I find today a renewed interest in this American, who wrote the finest political essay — “Civil Disobedience” — the finest philosophic treatise — *Walden* — the finest nature writing — the *Journals* — and some of the finest poetry — *Collected Poems* — in American literature. The current interest in Thoreau is best illustrated by the fact that under Editor-in-Chief Elizabeth Hall Witherell (see page 8), the Princeton University Press is publishing a new, definitive 30-volume edition of Thoreau’s writings. In *The New York Review of Books* (June 24, 1999) Leo Marx wrote the first of a two-part review of the first five volumes of this collection. Marx mentions five additional recently published books about Thoreau, who is today more integral to the American conscience than ever before.

Few places on the American landscape are more sacred to intelligent Americans than Walden Pond, near Concord, MA. In a small cabin built with his own hands on the shore of this lake, for two years and two months Thoreau invested his soul. He gave to the world his accounting of the investiture, *Walden, Or Life in the Woods* (1854). Thoreau set forth a personal ethic uncommon in literature or in life. In borrowing an axe to cut pine trees from which to build his cabin in March 1845, he told us “The owner of the axe, as he released hold of it, said it was the apple of his eye;” Thoreau wrote one of the simplest and most definitive statements on ethics anywhere: “but I returned it sharper than I received it.” So he returned life to us, and in our attention to his writings, we are the better for it.

Thoreau and his Concord friends understood that succession in the human order is analogous to that of forests. This succession is rooted in Jeffersonian democracy and expressed, Thoreau said, through authors who are a “natural and irresistible aristocracy in every society, and, more than kings or emperors, exert an influence on mankind.” We are seeing, perhaps, the climax stage of a new “high-timber” in humankind, expressed in the renewed interest in Thoreau himself and in other subtle ways.

In the worldwide circumstance, the surge of newly forming democracies is a part of what I speak. In America, there are other evidences. *The New York Times* (July 11, 1999) reported that young people are selecting service professions — teaching and public and social services — to a greater degree than since the 1960s. And Francis Fukuyama writes in the *Wilson Quarterly* (Summer 1999), in an essay entitled “Reconstructing America’s Moral Order,” that American society seems to be moving toward a more moral stance since what he calls the “Great Disruption,” which had its origins in the 1960s.

When this new moral order is in full flower, two things are certain: it will have been a natural growth from all that is past and recorded in books, and it will be different in degree from that which is now in place. It will reflect a courageous freedom that knows how to say “no” as well as “yes”; a militant intelligence that celebrates with equal fervor both the mind and soul; an inspired creativity that fuses the arts with science, humanities, and religion; a casual but firm discipline that drives us beyond mediocrity; a respect for Earth and its inhabitants that nurtures and preserves every living thing, and a graciousness that links us as human beings whose common heritage is an individual commitment to grow and blossom, each to his fullest in whatever his culture or choices. These were Thoreau’s bequests to us; they are America’s to the people of the new democracies; they shall be ours to our children and grandchildren.

Robert Cotner  
Editor



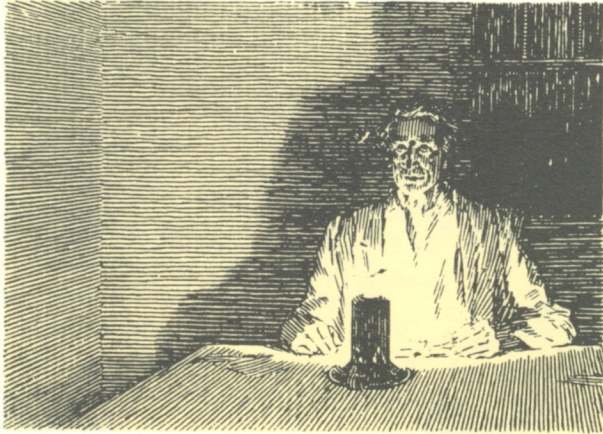
# The Marks of Thoreau upon Our Land – and in Our Mind



Walden Pond, 1959. "A lake is the landscape's most beautiful and expressive feature. It is earth's eye; looking into which the beholder measures the depth of his own nature. The fluviatile trees next to the shore are the slender eyelashes which fringe it, and the wooded hills and cliffs around are its overhanging brows." (All photos by and from the collection of Robert Cotner. All quotes from Walden unless otherwise noted.)



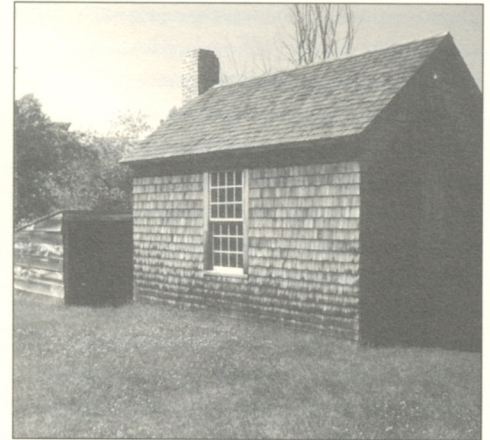
"Every day or two I strolled to the village to hear some of the gossip which is incessantly going on there," Ruzicka's art for "The Village."



"It is truly enough said, that a corporation has no conscience; but a corporation with conscientious [people] is a corporation with a conscience."

From "Civil Disobedience"

"To read well, to read true books in a true spirit, is a noble exercise, and one that will task the reader more than any exercise which the customs of the day esteem." Ruzicka's art for "Reading."



Reconstructed cabin, Concord, MA, 1977. "With this more substantial shelter about me, I had made some progress toward settling in the world. This frame, so slightly clad, was a sort of crystallization around me, and reacted on the builder."

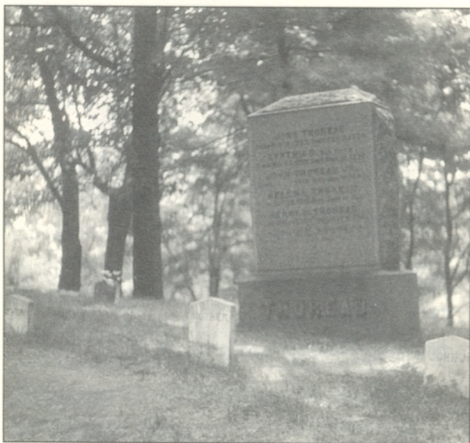
"I love a broad margin to my life."

From Walden

"I Am A Parcel of Vain Strivings Tied"

I am a parcel of vain strivings tied  
By a chance bond together.  
Dangling this way and that, their links  
Were made so loose and wide,  
Methinks,  
For milder weather.  
.....  
And here I bloom for a short time unseen,  
Drinking my juices up,  
With no root in the land  
To keep my branches green,  
But stand  
In a bare cup.

From Complete Poems



Thoreau family burial site, Author's Ridge, Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, Concord, MA, 1959.

"Do we call this the land of the free? What is it to be free from King George and continue the slaves of King Prejudice?"

From "Life Without Principle"

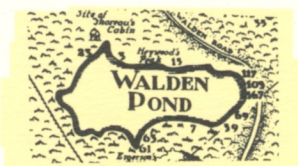


## Donnelley

(Continued from Page One)

printed goods shaped public values and exerted cultural influence during the second decade of the twentieth century, when commercial modernism flourished. As the socialist William Morris wrote in his manifesto printed at the Kelmscott Press in London at the end of the nineteenth century, modern machinery blurred distinctions between art and industry, making production and design in industry equally valuable to society. As the historian and former Librarian of Congress Daniel Boorstin commented in his mid-twentieth century analysis of the impact of pseudo-events on American life, commercial modernism characteristically "blurred" shadow and substance, "high" and "low" cultural demarcations, as a result of the importance placed on public opinion in the democratic marketplace during the first decades of the twentieth century. What sets printing apart as the product in such a modern American democratic marketplace is the ability of the page, the typographical features as well as the literary text, to function within the social economy as a product, to shape public values and public taste, and to create a climate of opinion in a mass market.

Public values might be aesthetic, political, moral, romantic, or cultural, or a combination of aspects of all of these. This essay focuses on how printed goods historically shaped American cultural values about books as a public good, something which anyone might possess and which anyone might produce. The campaign... is historically important in the broad context of American business, economic, and literary history. Further, in the more ambiguous context of cultural history, it might be argued that the Four American Books campaign demonstrates the potential for cultural influence that the mass communications industry can exert over public taste and over what people in the mass market think about as valuable.



## Selected Thoreau Materials at the Newberry Library

*Aesthetic Papers.* Boston: The Editor, 13, West Street; New York: G.P. Putnam, 1849. 248 p. Uncut in original printed wrappers. Edited by Elizabeth P. Peabody. Thoreau's essay on pp. 189-211 is the first appearance of his essay known later as "Civil Disobedience." In slipcase. (NL call number: \*Case Ruggles 274)

*A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers.* Boston; Cambridge: James Munroe and Company; New York: George P. Putnam; Philadelphia: Lindsay and Blackiston; London: John Chapman, 1849. 413 p. First edition, first issue. In slipcase. (NL call number: \*Case Ruggles 333)

*Walden; Or, Life in the Woods.* Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1854. 357 p. First edition. In slipcase. (NL call number: \*Case Ruggles 334)

*Excursions.* Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1863. 319 p. First edition. Edited by R.W. Emerson and Sophia Thoreau. Inserted letter signed: T.W. Higgenson. (NL call number: Case Y 245 .T 402)

*The Maine Woods.* Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1864. 328 p. First edition. Edited by Sophia Thoreau and W.E. Channing. (NL call number: Case Y 245 .T 4027; another copy, Case oF 27 .P5 T43)

*Cape Cod.* Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1865. 252 p. First edition. (NL call number: \*Case Ruggles 335; another copy, Case G 844142 .87)

*Letters to Various Persons.* Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1865. 229 p. First edition. Poems: 209-229. (NL call number: Case \*\*E 5 .T 3941)

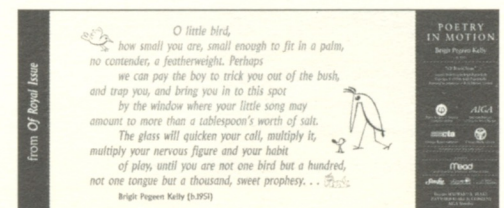
*A Yankee in Canada, with Anti-slavery and Reform Papers.* Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1866. 286 p. First edition. (NL call number: Case Y 245 .T 406)

## Poetry In Motion Moves To CTA in Hopes of Moving People to Poetry

By Hayward Blake

As you travel about on buses and trains be on the lookout for Chicago *Poetry in Motion* (see below), a collaboration between the Poetry Society of America, the Chicago Public Library, the Chicago Transit Authority and the American Institute of Graphic Arts/Chicago, in association with the Illinois Arts Council and sponsored by the Mead Corporation. The program promotes poetry and literacy through the display of selected poems on CTA buses and trains. Twenty-four display cards were designed by AIGA/Chicago members, including one by Caxtonian Hayward Blake. Two poems will be featured on the buses and trains each month until April 2000.

A sneak preview of the poetry posters and a poetry readings took place at the Harold Washington Library Center on Tuesday April 27, 1999. Books by the poets were also available for signing and purchase.



*The Dial.* Boston: Weeks, Jordan and company; London: Wiley and Putnam [etc.]. Vol. 1-4; July 1840 - April 1844. (NL call number: Case 5A 436)

*The Thoreau Society Bulletin.* Geneseo, N.Y. [etc.]: Thoreau Society. Vol. 1-227; 1941-present. (NL call number: folio Y 245 T43)

Compiled by  
John Hassett Brady  
Reference Librarian  
American & British History Bibliographer  
The Newberry Library



## Noted Civil Libertarian Reconsiders Uses, Abuses of Freedom

By Elmer Gertz

*Editor's Note: While at lunch a year or so ago, Caxtonian Elmer Gertz, an attorney who has done more for freedom of the press in America than almost any other attorney, living or dead, observed to the Caxtonian editor, "You know, I sometime have second thoughts about what we're doing with the freedoms we have." The editor replied, "Why don't you make your thinking on that matter a part of the record in a piece for the Caxtonian?" The following is his thinking.*

Life, it may be trite to say, is a series of ironies. I have learned this in connection with my long career as a defender of freedom of expression. I have been the successful attorney in a large number of censorship cases. Perhaps, the best known is my defense of Henry Miller's now classic *Tropic of Cancer*. This led to my close friendship with Miller. I have been the attorney, as well, for Russ Meyer, the robust producer of films like *Vixen*, and other cases all over the country. This, too, led to an enduring friendship with Meyer. I have been involved in numerous other cases involving attempts on my part to thwart those who would take away the reciprocal freedoms of authors and readers.

My activities in this area could have been predicted long ago when I became absorbed in the life and works of Frank Harris, author of the infamous *My Life and Loves*. I was the co-author of the first serious biography of Harris, published in 1931. When I first lectured at Harris' school, the University of Kansas, on literary freedom, it grew into a pamphlet entitled "Books and Their Right to Live." I was a charter member of the First Amendment Lawyers Association and one of its first presidents.

After the corseted productions of the Victorian Age, I applauded the informality of books, films, plays, and all else that followed. But I began to sense that all was not well when an enlightened friend used to telephone me after he had seen an especially raunchy motion picture and say, "See what you've done to us, Elmer." I laughed at his discomfort. Then I began to observe that, increasingly, motion pictures and television programs dealt with sexual intercourse in all forms, including sodomy, oral sex, frontal nudity, violence, and dirty language uttered



*"My furniture, part of which I made myself, and the rest cost me nothing of which I have not rendered on account, consisted of a bed, a table, a desk, three chairs, a looking-glass three inches in diameter, a pair of tongs and andirons..." Ruzicka's art in "Economy."*

by supposedly nice ladies. Nothing was hidden from view or hearing. There were no restraints whatsoever. We seemed to be retrogressing to a time of no standards, not only in entertainment, but in life as well. One excess led to more excesses.

I began to be as troubled as the friend who used to call me reprovingly. I began to wonder at my own role in the moral decline. I began to ask what is to be done about it. I am still convinced that the law is not the means of enforcing better taste. The legislatures, the courts, the police are not fitted to be the judges of what should be permissible. The individual himself should be the sole arbiter.

I recalled that even in the periods of the most stringent laws enforcing obscenity, there was a vast underground traffic in pornography. Some of the best booksellers had under-the-counter copies of favorite

forbidden books, which they sold clandestinely to their best customers. Some booksellers survived financially through such sales.

It is, perhaps, instructive to glance briefly at the history of freedom and suppression of expression in the checkered history of England. During the time of the first Queen Elizabeth, the glorious age of Shakespeare, the theater flourished because dramatists could say what they pleased. Then came the blight of Cromwell, the so-called *Lord Protector*, who closed the theaters and inhibited everything that one might call enlightenment. This was followed by the Restoration, not only of traditional monarchs, but of the theater and all literature to robust expression. It was the time of *Fanny Hill*, *Moll Flanders*, and similar uninhibited fare.

There came another reaction in the time of prim Victoria, when one dubious passage in a work could cause the suppression of the entire publication. Inevitably, there came in our own era the age of James Joyce (*Ulysses*), D. H. Lawrence (*Lady Chatterly's Lover*), Harris (*My Life and Loves*), Miller (*Tropic of Cancer*), and others. Books would now be judged in their entirety and not by isolated passages, and sex in and of itself would not

be forbidden. Are we now on the verge of another reaction? Will society once more repudiate the excess of freedom and impose legal restraints?

One can only hope that there will be some balance. It should be remembered that the Victorian Age was also the period of underground circulation of pornography. Somehow, it seems to me, we must regain civility in all areas. Young and old must learn the virtues of restraint and decorum.

One cannot wholly blame publishers and other producers of what is current. They respond to public demand. When good taste becomes normal, there will be less of a market for the raw and raucous. The only cure for what ails us is the creation of better tastes in young and old alike. This must be done

(See GERTZ, Page Six)



## Gertz

(Continued from Page Five)

through the schools, the places of worship, and, above all, in the homes. Teachers, religious leaders, and parents must set examples through guidance, not coercion.

If I were still in the active practice of law, would I defend freedom of expression as vigorously as I did in the past? Most assuredly! We can be worthy of the best only if we fight for it, despite all temptation to do otherwise.

## Caxton Club Publications Available on the Internet

By Frank J. Piehl

(Newly of the "Electronic Community")

Of the 61 publications by The Caxton Club, only eight are still in stock for purchase by members. What about the other 53? We all know about antiquarian dealers, we all savor the hunt at the book shops and fairs, and we all relish the thrill of discovering a book we covet.

Well, now there's another way to find that Caxton publication you've been looking for: get on the Web and dial up to the Web site for the Antiquarian Booksellers Association of America at [abaa.org](http://abaa.org). A search made on July 12, 1999, by entering "Caxton Club" in the field for publisher, brought up 65 matches. Quick as a wink, there was an inroad to 31 of the out-of-print Caxton publications, with a full description of each book, as well as price and ordering information. For some books, there were as many as four dealers to choose from. Prices ranged from \$32.50 to \$2,000.

Not all bibliophiles and bibliomaniacs have access to the Internet. Your historian held out until a month ago. If you desire help in locating an out-of-date Caxton publication contact your historian by phone (630/357-0844), by fax (630/527-8773), or by e-mail ([frankpiehl@aol.com](mailto:frankpiehl@aol.com)).



## Friday Luncheons Provide Rich Flow of Ideas and the Mingling of People

By Edward Quattrocchi

No volunteer job has given me more satisfaction for less effort than serving as co-chair with Leonard Freedman of The Caxton Club Friday luncheons. Leonard's powers of persuasion and his acute case of bibliomania assure me that a Caxtonian will always be waiting in the wings to provide us with an interesting program.

In planning the 1998/99 year, I urged Leonard to find a star speaker for our opening program in September. He took charge and contacted our reliable crowd pleaser, Elmer Gertz. The year thus began with the venerable and irrepressible Elmer, spinning his seemingly inexhaustible supply of anecdotes about the notable and eccentric literary figures he has known as friends and clients. His stories of defending such famous/notorious writers as Henry Miller and Frank Harris, against indictments of obscenity, were not only compelling but also historically significant. Elmer demonstrated the agility of his 90-year-old mind by speaking fluently without notes.

Because Ralph Carreno and his wife Susan were moving back to Massachusetts and had been such active participants at the Friday luncheons, we especially urged one of them to sing a swan song. Ralph, never a shrinking violet, came forward in October to inform us about one of his favorite men of letters, H.L. Mencken. Ralph, like Elmer Gertz, had previously spoken on his major bibliographical interest, architecture. This time he cogently demonstrated his wide familiarity with other subjects and books; he summarized Mencken's surprising genius, his cantankerous personality and his mission in distinguishing between the American and British English language.

Ken Patterson, at our November meeting, revealed his talents as a photographer, raconteur, sailor, journalist and scholar. He recounted a humorous and informative tale of his trip to Cuba to enjoy and understand Ernest Hemingway's legacy in that complex and fascinating island. Among other interesting Cubans, Ken

met and interviewed Carlos Fuentes, the prototype of the old fisherman in Hemingway's *Old Man and the Sea*.

At the last luncheon of 1998, Sherman Beverly encapsulated the life and works of Charles Chestnutt, a largely neglected African-American writer, scholar and bibliophile, who was a driving force in the Harlem Renaissance. Few at the table were aware Chestnut's wide interests as a writer and bibliophile, and that he was a member of the Rowfont Club of Cleveland at the turn of the century and wrote a story about that experience for the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1904.

Moving into the new year Leonard and I reasoned that we should start with one of our known stars, especially because of the vagaries of the January weather, which might hold down attendance. Accordingly Leonard collared our beloved ex-President, Ned Rosenheim, at lunch one day and flattered him into coming back for a command performance commemorating his presentation at the Friday luncheon in January, 1990, on the subject, "The History and Development of Modern Philology."

This repeat presentation was billed as "Reflections on Bad Poetry," but we had to wait until March to hear his wise and witty performance. We were right about the vagaries of the weather, for that was the week of the big snow in Chicago. Ned made a valiant effort to come from his home in northern Michigan for his presentation, but he was snowed in for a week. Fortunately his presentation was worth waiting for. He regaled us with almost 50 minutes of hilarious explications and commentaries on some of the worst poems extant in the English language. With the exception of William Shakespeare, I know of no rival to Professor Rosenheim in making a bore sound interesting.

Between Ned's snow-buried presentation in January and his resurrection in March, Truman Metzger in February entertained and informed us about his long addiction to the works of James Willard



Schultz, which surprised me. When I used to stop in the Great Expectations book store in Evanston, where Truman was the proprietor, he was usually reading a scholarly tome. Little did I expect that he would have a passion for reading and collecting the works of a boy's adventure writer, James Willard Schultz, one of the most prolific writers of well-informed books about Native Americans. Truman recounted the story about how Schultz's adventure stories changed the direction of his life and fed the romantic appetites of a generation of aspiring young adventurers.

In April Susan Hanes treated us to a wonderful literary travelogue with slides and narrative about her pilgrimage with her late husband, Houston, to the homes and places of literary significance in the life and works of Wilkie Collins. Susan's affection for Collins, and her appreciation of his works, is contagious. Her intimate knowledge of his works and his association with Charles Dickens gave me an appreciation of the character, personality and talent of an author who had been hitherto only a name.

Because Carolyn and I were on vacation in France and England, I had to miss Peter Stanlis' May presentation. But he received his usual high marks from all those in attendance. His scholarly knowledge of Robert Frost's works, as well as his personal relationship with the poet, gives Peter a special vantage point from which to evaluate the legacy of one of America's great poets. We wait with great expectations for the publication of Professor Stanlis' book on Frost.

Our last meeting of the 1998/99 year on June 11, was an enjoyable and educational experience for those of us in attendance. It was a fitting conclusion to the year's variegated, imaginative and educational programs, which revealed the depths to which other Caxtonians have been afflicted with Leonard's bibliomania. The format for this meeting was suggested by Truman Metzger, when he spoke in February. His idea to have several members talk about a book that has had a special significance in their lives indeed was a pleasurable and perhaps a cathartic experience for five veteran Caxtonians.

To lead off, John Chalmers cogently demonstrated his encyclopedic knowledge of



"A field of water betrays the spirit that is in the air. It is continually receiving new life and motion from above." Ruzicka's art for "The Ponds."

the history of the book and book-related subjects. He brought with him a few of his prized possessions: a rare *Book of Common Prayer*, in mint condition, published in 1786 in Philadelphia, which John acquired while a student at Oxford; a beautiful early edition of the important American flower language dictionary, *Flora's Interpreter*, by Sarah Josepha Hale, which is especially interesting because of the fine Pennsylvania paper on which it is printed; and an 18th century *Book of Psalms*, about which he explained the importance of "Cancels" in the production of a printed book.

Lynn Martin then recounted her first love affair with a book, John Masefield's *A Box of Delights*. Although Masefield is better known as a poet, Lynn convinced us that his children's books will be longer remembered than his poetry. She exuded the enthusiasm she felt as a young girl (how long ago she would not divulge), when she discovered the adventure and pleasure of reading. Protestingly that she is not a true bibliophile, she waxed eloquent with an ode to the joys and wonders that can be found between the covers of a book.

Frank Piehl, our esteemed Caxton Club historian, surprised us by not talking about his extensive collection of the works of Eugene Field. Instead he introduced us to an unsung bookmaker, artist, poet, and regional bibliophile, who magically transformed Frank in middle age into a charismatic bibliomaniac from his former existence as a research chemist at the Amoco Corporation. He showed us a few of the magnificent books published by Earl H. Reed. These books, mostly stories and pictures about the Indiana dunes at the turn of the century, combine a wonderful blend of poetry, art, and the crafts of copper etching and printing.

Leonard Freedman next described the high points of his extensive collection of books associated with Chicago. He was conflicted in his own mind whether his favorite book was John Dos Passos' *USA*, or Nelson Algren's *The Man With a Golden Arm*. What makes Leonard's appraisal of Algren's book, set on the west side of Chicago, particularly interesting is

the fact that he lived in the neighborhood and knew, or thinks he knew, many of fictitious characters in the story. And there is a good chance that his claim is credible.

I concluded the five-part presentation by showing and telling about my acquisition of an Italian Renaissance classic, Pietro Bembo's *Gli Asolani*, published in Venice in 1505 by the Aldine Press in Venice. This book is one of my prized possessions, because it is about one of my favorite subjects — love; it was written by one of my favorite Italian humanists, Pietro Bembo, with a dedicatory letter to one of my favorite Italian women, Lucrezia Borgia; it was printed by my favorite Italian printer, Aldus Manutius; and I acquired it for \$100 in my one of my favorite Evanston bookstores.

The final Caxton luncheon of the year was enjoyable for all who participated in the wrap-up discussion. It is continually stimulating and educational to learn more about the wide range of literary and book interests of Caxtonians, who are invited to join us on September 10 for the first meeting of the new program year.



# Book Marks

## Luncheon Programs

*Your Special Luncheon Invitation. . .*  
*Luncheon meetings resume in September*

**Date:** September 10, 1999  
**Location:** Mid-Day Club  
**Speaker:** Dr. Gwin Kolb

Fellow Caxtonian Gwin Kolb will share his teaching experiences in China, where he taught English at the University of Peking and the Foreign Studies University, Beijing, in 1994. He taught two American Southern classics, Harriet Beecher Stow's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and Margaret Mitchell's *Gone With the Wind*. Caxtonians will want to mark that date on their calendars and plan to attend the opening luncheon meeting for the new year.

*Edward Quattrocchi*  
*Leonard Freedman*  
*Co-chairs*

## Letter to the Editor

Dear Bob Cotner:

By definition, all Caxtonians are devoted in one way or another to the printed book. But the Web and the Internet are here to stay. Where else can you access such a wealth of information so quickly?

The Caxton Club has its own Web page. It's well-designed and communicates our story to the book world. A quick examination of the traffic report for the site in June reveals some interesting information. The site was accessed 6,868 times in June, mostly by Americans, but also by people from as far away as Australia and the Ukraine. Did they access the site because they were interested in The Caxton Club? No way! Of the July hits, only 314 were directly to the home page. Our reading room contains complete reprints of selected articles from the *Caxtonian*. Our book list was accessed 72 times. When people reach our Web site in their searches about other topics, they are introduced to The Caxton Club, probably for the first time. What better way to attract persons who share our objectives than through our Web site?

If we're going to thrive in our second century as well as we did in our first, we'll have to give greater support to our Web site. Paul Baker created the site and maintains it with precious little help, and he does it all at no cost to the Club, even though it entails not only his own donated time, but also the time of his paid staff. We owe him so much, but who thanks him?

It's time for Caxtonians to wake up and speak out. Let's get some manpower support and some financial support for Paul to enhance our image on the Web. Anyone interested in joining me to do this, contact your Historian by calling 630/357-0844, by faxing 630/527-8773, or by e-mailing frankpiehl@aol.com.

*Frank Piehl*

## Dinner Programs

*Your Special Dinner Invitation. . .*

**Date:** August 18, 1999  
**Place:** Mid-Day Club  
**Speaker:** Elizabeth Hall Witherell on  
"The Writings of Henry David Thoreau"

Of the many voices calling out from the pages of American literature, none has been so persistent and influential as Henry David Thoreau. Before coming to America I lived in a small stone cottage named *The Black Bull* on the banks of the River Aray near the town of Inveraray on Loch Fyne. Water was drawn from a hand-pumped well and light came from kerosene lanterns. My reading material included *Cape Cod*, *Walden* and "Civil Disobedience." My very minor civil disobedience was to poach salmon from the Duke of Argyll, late at night, in the deep pools of the Aray. What a pleasure then to find that Dr. Elizabeth "Beth" Hall Witherell, one of the world's leading scholar in all things *Thoreau*, is moving from Santa Barbara to the Midwest and, in spite of a busy life, would be delighted to be the speaker for the August 18<sup>th</sup> Caxton dinner meeting. Beth is the Editor-in-Chief for the magnificent Princeton University Press project; *The Writings of Henry D. Thoreau*. The project was established in 1966 to provide for the first time accurate texts of Thoreau's works, and is expected to be completed in 30 volumes.

Beth Hall Witherell received her Ph.D. in American Literature and M.A. in English from the University of Wisconsin, Madison, and her B.A. in English from the University of Michigan. She has recently completed a position as Lecturer with the University of California, Santa Barbara, with the College of Creative Studies. Prior to this, she held the position of Curator of Manuscripts, Special Collections, Davidson Library.

Henry David Thoreau told us to beware of all enterprises that require new clothes. This evening of Thoreau needs no new clothes. Please come and welcome Beth Hall Witherell back to the Midwest and be renewed by the life and words of Thoreau, this most American of Americans and citizen of the world.

*Kenneth Houston Paterson*  
*Vice President Elect*  
*Chair, Program Committee*