

Gazing at Polyphemus . . .

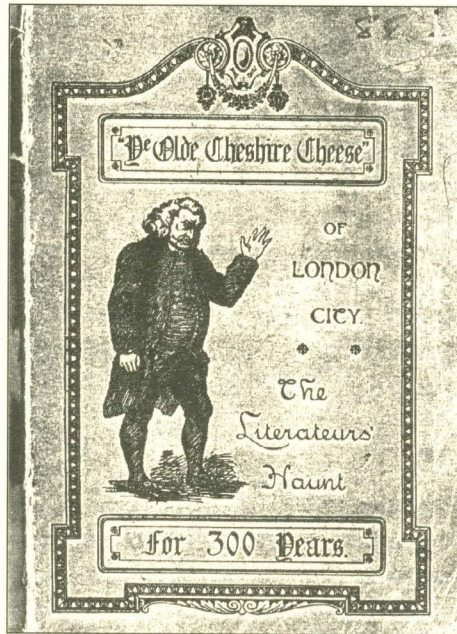
Books — *More Engaging than Computers*

Steven J. Masello

The virtues of the computer have been extolled by many academics for years now. I, for one, will never enjoy staring into the mean, green screen. I do not find reading from the VDT at all “user friendly.” In fact, after every session before a computer screen, I rise from the desk mildly nauseated, suffering from double vision, a stiff neck, and a headache. In addition to these attendant miseries, my research or writing is restricted to fair weather only — one flash from Jove, and all is “shut down.” Increasingly, more and more written material is being made available on software. Some propose to place virtually all of our classics on diskettes for students to read while glued to their terminals. I can think of no more unpleasant way to enjoy a good tale.

None of these drawbacks attends the reading of a book. A printed volume offers myriad pleasures along with extraordinary convenience and durability. First of all, there is no need to “interface.” A book is not “served-up” to the reader, the reader is at his leisure to engage the written page: no screen with a nasty, nagging, impatient little cursor demanding undivided attention. It is so much easier to savor a book, to reread a passage, to close your eyes and reflect upon what you have just read, and then return to the passage. And the book may be carried everywhere, in hand, in a briefcase, or a commodious pocket, without the least fear of breakage, short-circuiting, or unanticipated down-time. Another feature of the book and, I confess, one particularly attractive to me, is the visual enjoyment derived from the handsome or beautifully printed volume.

There is much appeal to the senses in handling and reading the book: the character of the typeface, the texture of the paper, the design of the volume, and, of course, the feel of a handsomely bound book. For centuries the presentation of the written word as an art form attracted the keen attention of the bibliophile. Consider



“Scattered among the giants of literature, I come across an occasional pygmy: The book of The Cheese: Being Traits and Stories of ‘Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese’ of London City (7th edition, 1920).” (From the collection of Steven J. Masello.)

the exquisitely illuminated manuscripts of the Renaissance. These remain works of art in themselves. In fact, Browning’s dying Bishop, in his poem “The Bishop Orders His Tomb at Saint Praxed’s Church,” speaks longingly of “brown Greek manuscripts” (as well, I might add, as “mistresses with great smooth marbly limbs” — clearly, he knew what he liked and what he would miss most).

It was during the Renaissance when some of the finest early “modern” libraries were established. Among the most famous of these was that of the great condottiere and humanist, Federigo da Montefeltro (1422-1482), Duke of Urbino. (It was during the reign of his son, Guibobaldo, that the Urbino court achieved its enduring fame through Baldessare Castiglione’s *Book of the Courtier*, published in 1528.) Federigo sought to create a library joining together knowledge and beauty in a way unsurpassed in the world.

His friend and biographer Vespasiano da Bisticci relates in his *Memoirs* how it was that Federigo pursued with singled-minded determination his purpose in creating the finest library since ancient times. “He spared neither cost nor labor, and when he knew of a fine book, whether in Italy or not, he would send for it...he always employed, in Urbino, in Florence and in other places 30 or 40 scribes in his service. He took the only way to make a fine library like this: by beginning with the Latin poets, with any comments on the same which might seem merited; next the orators, with the works of Tully and all Latin writers and grammarians of merit; so that not one of the leading writers in this faculty should be wanted. He sought also all the known works on history in Latin, and not only those, but likewise his histories of Greek writers done into Latin, and the orators as well. The Duke also desired to have every work on moral and natural philosophy in Latin, or in Latin translations from Greek...also whatever books which were to be had in Hebrew, beginning with the Bible and all those dealt with by the Rabbi Moses and other commentators....He had an edition of the Bible made in two most beautiful volumes, illustrated in the finest possible manner and bound in gold brocade with rich silver fittings.”

The Duke lavished time and great expense on his library, so highly did he prize the wisdom of the ancients and “moderns.” Moreover, all the books were manuscripts: “In the library all the books are superlatively good, and written with the pen, and had there been one printed volume it would have been ashamed in such company. They were beautifully illustrated and written on parchment...there will be found not a single imperfect folio.” Vespasiano even went so far as to praise the Duke’s library as superior to the papal library and those of San Marco at Florence, Pavia, and, even, Oxford, for “they possessed the same work in many examples, but



Musings...

CAXTONIAN

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A few years ago I heard the story of a ballerina whose recorded music stopped suddenly as she was performing before a large audience. In the silence of the auditorium, the dancer continued her performance as if the music were playing. Every pirouette, every leap, every turn was done to perfection, but in silence except for her soft footfalls on the stage. The audience, surprised first by the silence was stunned finally by the flawless execution of the dancer in that silence, and gave her a standing ovation when she completed the dance. Asked later how she was able to continue her dance without music, she replied, "I danced to the music in my head."

In the final analysis, we all dance to the music in our heads on our daily journeys in life. Careful introspection will reveal whether the rhythm of our profession is the subtle calling of, to use Robert Frost's terms, "wisdom beyond wisdom," or just some occupational enterprise to get us from early training to early retirement. Thomas Jefferson's pursuit of happiness throughout his long life at Monticello has been described as "relentless, systematic, and versatile." This is another way of saying, I suppose, what long-time friend Henry Thoreau said, "*We are all sculptors and painters, and our material is our own flesh and blood and bones.*"

The relentless, systematic, and versatile creation of a life that will carry us with grace as far as we can or as far as we must go is what the human quest is all about. If we are astute, we learn early that there are fewer places in the professions for truly gifted people than there are gifted people to fill them. We learn, as well, that more often than not the truly gifted people are not the people selected for leadership positions in most organizations. We make sense of our lives, thus, by the conscientious development of a self capable of dancing to the exigence of unfolding circumstances that come our way — expected and unexpected, but always without explanation — in the course of our days. This is a private, even solitary, endeavor through which we gather an intellectual ensemble of our own choosing, the spiritual dimensions of which will be a transcendental linking with others of like minds over the miles and throughout the years.

The search is always, it seems to me, for equals in spirit. In that search, if we are wise, imagination will drive us backward as well as outward to what Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn called the "great cultural tradition of the foregoing centuries together with the spiritual foundations from which they grew." We make friends with Mozart, Shakespeare, Emerson, Emily Dickinson, Saul Bellow, Ralph Ellison, and others. The library and gallery, as well as the keyboard and studio, will be our laboratories, forging diverse rhythms rich in experience and long in memory and offering varieties of choices for daily life.

As a child I danced to the music of fear. Then, a few years ago, I discovered that most folks are religious because they are afraid not to be, and I had a conversion of sorts. I learned that a healthy doubt is integral to, even substance of, faith. My conversion was from fear to a certain Promethean humor. A verse by Robert Frost informed a new rhythm for daily dancing: "*Forgive, O Lord, my little jokes on Thee, / And I'll forgive thy great big one on me.*" A happy skeptic is truer to the faith than a dour saint.

The longer we live, the more history of all things becomes necessary. Without a thorough, comprehensive history, we understand few things sufficiently. Today's confusing world becomes a bit clearer — though no more tolerable — when we understand the Weimar Republic. The poor in Cabrini-Green and other federal housing projects will be more appreciated with memories of what our ancestors did to Native Americans.

Chronological age means absolutely nothing except as we learn to dance to the music in our heads — ever expanding, growing more complex, more subtle, more informed. A sentence from Norman Maclean's profound tale, *A River Runs Through It*, provides a theme for my own life-dance: "*One of life's quiet excitements is to stand somewhere apart from yourself and watch yourself softly become the author of something beautiful.*" In that motif lies a human quest suitable for a new millennium.

Robert Cotner, *Editor*

Adapted from an essay published in The Human Quest, July-August 1993, p. 8.

Ah, alas for a world that does not love reading

Elmer Gertz

Since the death of my beloved wife Mamie, I am living at the Hallmark, a residential community for retired persons on Lake Shore Drive. I am not wholly a retired person, since I still teach, as I have for the past 29 years, at the John Marshall Law School. The Hallmark is a beautiful building, virtually a part of Lincoln Park. It has many amenities. There are a billiard room and exercise facilities. Since I have strict religious scruples against any form of exercise, I do not avail myself thereof. There is a studio for those with artistic talents. There is a bank, where I deposit my pauper's purse, and a beauty studio, which strives mightily to improve my looks. There are postal facilities, dear to me because I have a deep love for receiving mail. There are dining facilities doing their best to add flesh to my already commodious frame. And there is a library with many exciting books. I love to browse among books. I suspect that the ancient characters here with diminishing vision and lessened interests read little besides newspapers and magazines. I gave the library several of the books I have written, which remain unread except for my loving tribute to my late wife, which I titled *Remembering Mamie*.

I have developed the delightful habit of reading several pages at frequent intervals throughout the day. I could take the books to my comfortable apartment, but I prefer what I call "sneak reading." Let me illustrate. On one shelf I found a book entitled *Sez Who? Sez Me*, by the recently departed Mike Royko, for years a daily columnist, first for one Chicago newspaper and then another. Royko turned out a fascinating column every day on every conceivable subject. He seemed to observe everything and everybody with unusual vision. I remember with delight that he once greeted me on the street with the words, "Elmer, I have not seen you on television lately." One of his columns contained a passage from Supreme Court Justice William Brennan, which he, mistakenly, attributed to me. The book contains a selection of his columns, some of which I had forgotten. In reading from the Royko book, as well as other books, I sit in the most obscure corner of the library, so that my guffaws do not distract others in the room. But Royko's columns were not always funny. They

were sometimes angry reports on bureaucratic excesses or the thoughtlessness of some people, or the kindnesses of others. I was sorry when I finished the book.

What other volume would I sneak into next? I chose the marvelous book on Sarah Bernhardt by Cornelia Otis Skinner, not alone because her great subject always intrigued me in my love of the classic theater. Cornelia had had a clandestine love affair with one of my great friends. I remembered too of the occasion when Cornelia and I were both invited to a party at the home of a mutual friend, and we spent the evening talking to each other and ignoring all others. It was not polite, but it was rewarding.

Cornelia brought Bernhardt back to life. This illegitimate daughter of a Dutch Jewish woman was reared as a Roman Catholic but remained Jewish in spirit, as when she was a dedicated advocate of Dreyfus, falsely accused of betraying France — this despite the anti-Semitic, anti-Dreyfus views of her own illegitimate son. There was a delightful tidbit early in the book when Bernhardt's maternal grandmother lived with her and complained of the lack of kosher food. Apparently, they did not serve it in Sarah's churches.

Of course I regretted it when my sneak reading of this book was at an end. I chose Andre Maurois' revealing book about Benjamin Disraeli next. I was intrigued by this account of a man who became Prime Minister of England and a great rival of the unctuous Gladstone, thanks to his father having converted to Christianity when Benjamin was a child. He would not have been eligible even to vote in benighted Britain, except for that fortuitous circumstance. I was intrigued by Disraeli's lifelong pride in his Jewish origin while professing great faith in the Church of England. His almost heartbreaking devotion to his wife, years older than he, was memorable. Once again, I regretted that my reading of this book came to an end.

I then selected a volume totally different. It was an autobiography of an entertainer who had given me much joy at the true start of his career at the 5100 Club in Chicago. All the city went again and again to see him. Soon all of the country knew of his comic skills, not simply because he told funny stories, but because he created an



Commissioned by the Highwood Public Library in 1989, the sculpture "Fables of Our Times" was sculpted by Margot McMahon. The models for the sculpture were Barbara Beck and Kate Marino, daughter and granddaughter of Margaret and Bruce Beck. The sculpture above sits in the garden of the Becks in Evanston. (Photo by Bruce Beck.)

original character, a man of Lebanese descent, who was a devout Roman Catholic and embodied the best of all people and creeds. Some of his tales, such as the story of the motorist and the jack, have become a part of our national tradition. Danny Thomas, originally named Amos Jacobs, was not a Bernhardt, but he too is a part of the line of great American performers.

What was I to sneak-read next? I remembered the profound impression Frank Harris' so-called "Contemporary Portrait" of Sir Richard Burton had made upon me many years earlier, leading me to write my first book, a pioneering biography of Frank Harris. Burton was an undiplomatic diplomat, an adventurer and explorer *par excellence*, a student and practitioner of love in all of its varied aspects. He had translated *Arabian Nights* and several of the sex-classics of India. He once had great fame, but he was not then and is not now fully appreciated.

See *READING*, page 7

The Caxton Club and Its Typography

Bruce Beck and Hayward R. Blake

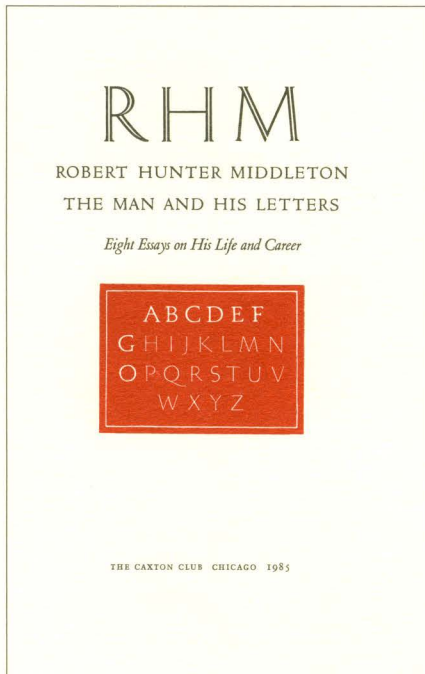
The visual character of The Caxton Club during the last century often has been expressed, not always deliberately, by the quality of its publications. Since its beginning it has associated itself with a desire for and the pursuit of this quality, yet it has not always been successful.

In recent years, especially because of the enormous change in publishing technique caused by computer, it has become necessary to develop a distinct Caxton Club look, one that will be applicable to a greater variety of our publications.

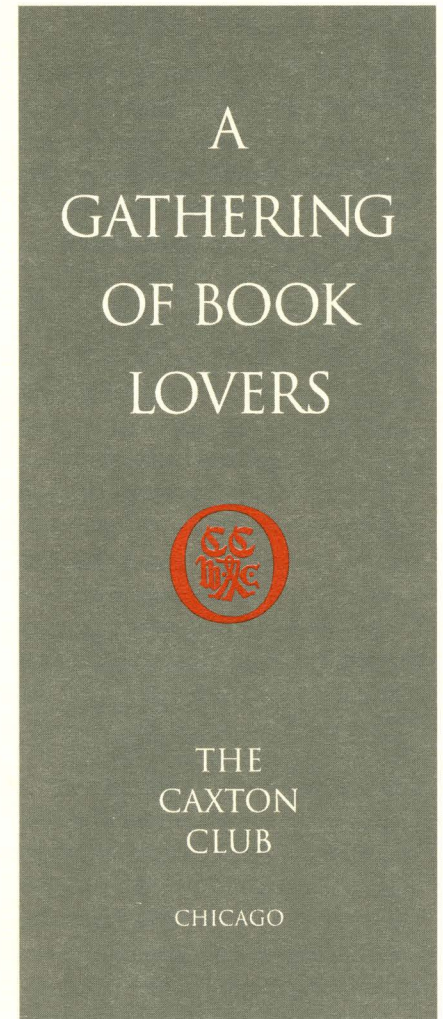
Such a need didn't exist a generation ago when the design processes were far more uniform and the available technical help was more expert. The Caxton Publications Committee and those members who have worked on the various publications shown here, have now joined together to reach common agreement on this new identity.

Hayward Blake has been working on the development of a new look for the *Caxtonian* and other publications for some time. With help from Bob Williams, who has edited and designed the *The Chicago Diaries of John M. Wing*, Matt Doherty, who designed the new member folder, and Bruce Beck, a Caxton Club look has evolved that is intended to identify the organization in a consistent way. There will be typographic consistency through the use of Paul Baker's *Eusebius*, plus *Jenson* and *Times* for text, and *Trajan* for display.

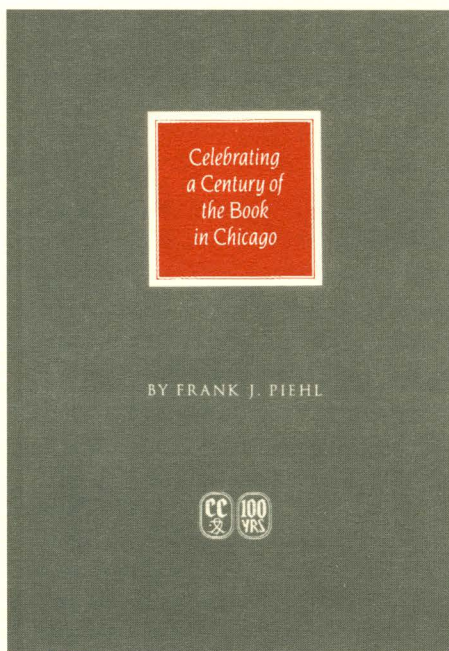
True consistency will take time and a great deal of effort. Each change or new use will be discussed and explained in future *Caxtonians*.



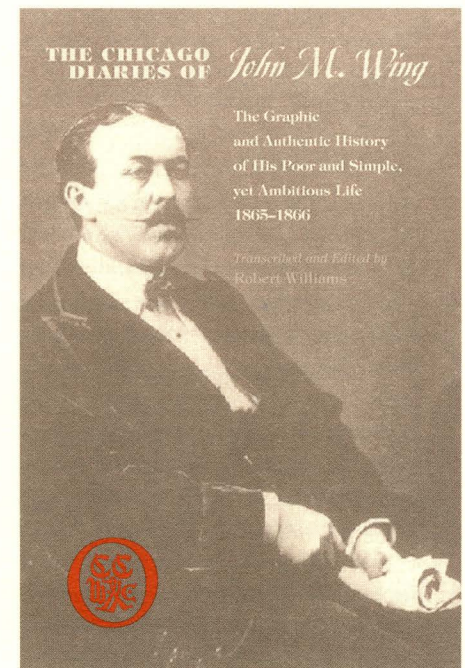
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1. RHM Robert Hunter Middleton, *The Man and His Letters*, 1985, Designer Bruce Beck, Type: Monotype Bembo, Ludlow Eusebius, Delphian and the alphabet-block label engraved in 1953 by Middleton
2. *Celebrating A Century of the Book in Chicago*, 1995, Designer Bruce Beck, Type: Trajan, Novarese and Paul Baker's Eusebius
3. *A Gathering of Book Lovers*, 1999, Designer Matthew Doherty, Type: Trajan and Jenson
4. *The Chicago Diaries of John M. Wing*, 1999 (Work in progress), Designer Robert Williams, Type: Tiffany and Ovidus

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N O V E M B E R

THE CAXTON CLUB
Luncheon Program: 12:30pm, Friday, January 14, 2000
Speaker: **Paul Ruxin**
Presentation: *Boswell for the Defense*

We have all heard of and read about Boswell as biographer of Dr. Samuel Johnson. **Caxtonian Ruxin**, a veteran of Cleveland's Rowfant Club, an attorney and one of the foremost Boswell collectors in America, will focus on Boswell the attorney. The son of a Chief Justice of Scotland, Boswell became a lawyer and represented a variety of real estate and commercial matters. The only pleasure he ever got from the law was his pro bono work. One of the most famous cases was his defense of William Ried, sheep-stealer. Ruxin will relate this story and bring several one-of-a-kind books from Boswell's own personal library for the pleasure of guests.

Dinner Program: 5pm, Wednesday, January 19, 2000
Panel: **Paul Baker, Frank Piehl and Martin Eberhard**
Presentation: *New Technologies for the Book Lover in the New Millennium*

Frank Piehl will introduce the program with a testimonial, "How the Internet Changed My Life." He will share the changes in communications and the availability of the widest selection of books imaginable. Caxton Webmaster **Paul Baker**, will share his work and experiences as a professional and a pioneer in Internet communication. **Martin Eberhard** cofounder and C.E.O. of Nuvo Media will review their *Rocket e Book Pro*, a hand held electronic book with 36,000 pages of text and graphics. Chicago author Scott Turow's newest book *Personal Injuries* will be published simultaneously in both paper and Rocket Edition.

This will be an important, even a vital, meeting for Caxtonians. Make our first dinner of the New Year a part of your plans.

All Meetings are held in The Mid-Day Club, on the 56th flr, of BankOne, BankOne Plaza, Chicago, at Madison & Clark.
Call 312 255 3710, for both luncheon and dinner reservations.

7

5. Letterhead and Card, 2000, Designer Hayward R. Blake, Type: Trajan and Jenson
6. Caxton Club Web Pages, 1996 Designer Paul Baker, Type: Eusebius and Times
7. Invitation, 1997, Designer Hayward R. Blake, Type: Trajan and Times
8. Bookmark, 1998, Designer Hayward R. Blake, Type: Trajan and Perpetua
9. Directory, 1999, Designer Hayward R. Blake, Type: Trajan and Times

Somerset Maugham — World Traveler, Famed Storyteller
By Craig Shovater
Caxtonian, September 1997

This month, September 1997, marks the 100th anniversary of the publication of W Somerset Maugham's first novel, *Lane of Lamberth*. Written during his final year of medical school, the realist novel draws upon his experiences in treating patients from the Lamberth slums of London. The book achieved modest public acclaim—even notoriety—sufficient, in fact, for Maugham to abandon his medical career to become a full-time writer. A year after his publishing debut, he left London for Capri in Italy, beginning a lifelong pattern of travel and story-telling that became the Maugham persona for millions of readers. Over the next 60 years, he became one of the most successful writers of all time.

When Maugham was born—in the British Embassy in Paris in 1874—he was destined to become a lawyer. His father and grandfather had been

5

Chicago Under Wraps: Dust Jackets from 1920-1950
Over 60 scarce book jackets of Chicago interest will be on view at the Art Institute of Chicago from November 29, 1999 through January 10, 2000.

Our History

Meeting and speakers schedule

6

THE CAXTON CLUB

DIRECTORY

THE CAXTON CLUB AT THE NEWBERRY LIBRARY ON WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1998

YZK

2000-2001

9

The Caxton Book Auction: *Ya Shoulda Bin There*

Dan Crawford

At the end, people rushed to the auction room, crying “Did I win? Did I get it?” There followed cries of glee and grumbles of discontent. The loudest of the latter came from the club bookkeeper, who growled, “Couldn’t somebody have bid three dollars more?” Proceeds from the auction, held at the Caxton dinner meeting, November 17, amounted to the un-gainly sum of \$3,997.

For those who are number-oriented, as well as book-minded, other useless statistics follow. (The list is discreet, giving away neither the names of successful bidders nor the sums they paid, in case someone’s significant other hasn’t learned the full truth yet.)

Attendance at the dinner: 83, including speaker Leslie Hindman

Number of books and posters for sale: 64 (in 53 lots)

Number of donors: 37

Number of items sold: 56

Number of buyers: 29

Number of people who donated AND bought: 13

Number of people who bought their own books back: 0 (although several did bid on their own donations)

Oldest book in the sale: Sir Thomas Wyatt’s *Poetical Works*, 1831 (donated by John P. Chalmers)

Biggest item for sale; Austin Cooper’s poster “Booklover’s Britain: Romany Rye” (donated by Alice Schreyer and Anthony Batko)

Item printed in the smallest edition: *Of Windes*, by Bartholomew Anglicus, printed in an edition of 25 copies in 1971 (donated by Robert W. Karrow, Jr.)

Book arriving from farthest away: Rockwell Kent’s *The Pearl*, 1990 facsimile, which arrived at the auction from Portland, ME (donated by Eliot Stanley)

Best inscription: *Ruins and Visions* by Stephen Spender, who inscribed it to a “First Edition Collector showing good judgement (!)” (donated by Raymond Epstein)

Number of items in the auction written, printed, designed, produced, or published by past or present Caxtonians: 23

Number of books donated by the most generous donor: 8

Number of books bought by the most successful bidder: 5

Number of books bid on by the busiest bidder: 7 (he wound up buying 4 of those)

Book with the most bids: tie between Daniel Burnham’s *Plan of Chicago*, 1970 edition (donated by Colleen Dionne) and Dante Gabriel Rossetti’s *The Blessed Damozel*, with a note from the printer, Fred Goudy, laid in (donated by James. M. Wells)

Books with disappointed bidders offering to arm wrestle the winning bidder for possession of the book: Elbert Hubbard’s *Scrapbook*, paired with *A Message to Garcia* (donated by Gene Hotchkiss) and *The Hungry Steam Shovel* (also donated by Gene Hotchkiss)

Number of people expressing deep relief on finding they’d been outbid on expensive items: 5 (including this reporter)

Statistic that took the most research to uncover: The 1995 auction of five specially-bound copies of the Centennial history raised \$6400

Chances that the Caxton Club will hold another auction like the 1999 auction at some time in the year 2000: pretty good.

People who should have been at the 1999 auction but missed it: You know who you are!

Postscript: on discovering the total amount received in the auction, Caxtonian Celia Hilliard donated an additional \$3, in the name of easier bookkeeping. ❖

Books

Continued from page 1

lacked the other writings of the author, nor had they writers in all the faculties like this library.”

Still today, a fine library provides a lovely retreat for the mind. When “the world is too much with us,” I seek spiritual solace, whenever possible, in my study, filled with my grandfather’s books. He collected a beautiful and eminently tasteful library of leading Western classics and, more specifically, of the British and Continental masters of the 18th and 19th Centuries: Voltaire, Fielding, Sterne, Goethe, Balzac, Macauley, Merimee, Eliot, Flaubert, Zola, Conrad, and others. There is, for example, a 1730 three-volume edition of Congreve’s plays and an 1806, three-volume edition of James Beresford’s *The Miseries of Human Life*; or *The Groans of Samuel Sensitive*, and *Timothy Testy*; *With a Few*

Supplementary Sighs from Mrs. Testy. Among the giants of literature, I find an occasional curious pygmy, such as *The History of The Chastity Belt* (1920), with some intriguing illustrations.

I experience a quiet contentment when I retreat to my study. I close out the din of the world not unlike the experience described by Machiavelli in a lovely letter to Paolo Vettori detailing his daily routine while in exile from the Florentine Court: “When evening comes I return home and enter my study; on the threshold I take off my everyday garments covered with mud and dirt and put on regal and courtly robes. Fitted out appropriately I step inside the venerable courts of the Ancients where, solicitously received by them, I nourish myself on that food which is mine alone and for which I was born; where I am unashamed to converse with them and ask them the motives of their actions, and they, out of their human kindness, answer me. And for four hours at a time I feel no boredom, I forget all my troubles, I do not dread poverty; and I am not terrified by death. I give myself over to them totally.”

I fully realize that time will not remain still to satisfy my antiquarian bent, but nevertheless, I am convinced that, despite the prognostications of the future-shockers, the mean, green screen will never altogether replace the printed volume; that would mean to forgo one of life’s simplest and most accessible pleasures. A final word on the joys of reading comes from Virginia Woolf’s concluding paragraph of “How Should One Read a Book” from *The Second Common Reader*: “Yet who reads to bring about an end however desirable? Are there not some pursuits that we practice because they are good in themselves, and some pleasures that are final? And is not this one among them? I have sometimes dreamt, at least, that when the Day of Judgment dawns and the great conquerors and lawyers and statesmen come to receive their rewards — their crowns, their laurels, their names carved indelibly upon imperishable marble — the Almighty will turn to Peter and will say, not without a certain envy when He sees us coming with our books under our arms, ‘Look, these need no reward. We have nothing to give them here. They have loved reading.’” ❖

New Caxton Club members welcomed

A hearty *Welcome!* to new members of the Caxton Club, and thanks to those nominating them.

Charles A. Kelly, Jr.

Nominated by Gwin Kolb

Seconded by Frank Piehl

Kay Michael Kramer

Nominated by Frank Piehl

Seconded by Bruce Beck

Marta O'Neill

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Stephen Stinehour

Nominated by Bruce Beck

Seconded by Hayward Blake

Lydia Tolbot

Nominated by Tom Joyce

Seconded by Karen A. Skubish ❖

A Letter from Pennsylvania . . .

Caxtonian Touches Lindsay Family Members

Dear Mr. Cotner,

Susan Hammond [of the Vachel Lindsay Museum] has sent me from Springfield a copy of the July Caxtonian with your articles on Vachel Lindsay, General William Booth and Johnny Appleseed. I have written my thanks to her, but I feel the impulse to thank you directly for your warm-hearted and lively appreciation of Vachel and his Gospel of Beauty.

As it happens, family letters record that Vachel was on a visit to the Lindsay summer camp in Empire, CO, when the news of General Booth's death was telegraphed around the world. I once checked the file of Denver newspapers in the Library of Congress to see if the news had reached that far before Vachel left. It had — on the front page. So his poem on General Booth must have been sounding in his head as he resumed his walk westward, as far ad Wagon Mound, NM, from where he took the train the rest of the way to his uncle Johnson Lindsay's hospitable home in Los Angeles.

I am sending your articles on to our son, John Chapman Ward — named for Johnny Appleseed — because I know he will find them as absorbing as I have. And having published an article once on just this westward hike and its connection to Vachel's great tribute to General Booth, he will value your articles and photos in this issue of the Caxtonian.

With thanks, sincerely,

Catharine Ward

Editor's note: Catharine Ward is the niece of Vachel Lindsay and lives in Guynedd, PA.

Reading

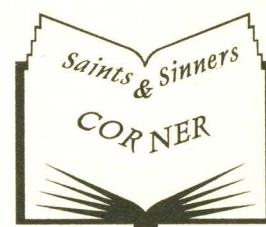
Continued from page 3

The library is well stocked with biographies, my favorite kind of book, just as are drama from the Greeks through Shakespeare, Ibsen, Shaw, and O'Neil — and poetry too though not contemporary versifiers but 19th Century prodigies, like Blake, Keats, Shelley, and Browning. If I live to Moses' age of 120, I will not have had enough time to read all that I love.

Once I begin reading a book, I have to see it through. It will be easy to go through books about Harry S. Truman, the one President whom I could call my friend. Is there a book I have abandoned without finishing? I can think sadly of one — Kitty Kelley's book on Nancy Reagan. I did not admire either Ronald or Nancy, but even they deserve more than the snottiness of Kitty.

Sometimes people take a peek at what I am reading. Almost never does anyone talk with me about my reading materials. Perhaps they don't want to invade my privacy; more likely they are simply indifferent. I am reminded of the time long ago when a great master, like Charles Dickens, read publicly before large audiences, who paid for the privilege of listening to him. Now, such rare public readings seem to be confined to a few poets appearing before small, select audiences, generally in special bookstores.

I mentioned recently to one of the Hallmark residents that Henry Miller was a good water colorist as well as a famous writer. The man looked puzzled and asked "Who is Henry Miller?" No wonder I "sneak-read." Ah, alas for a world that does not love reading! ❖



Caxtonian Gwendolyn Brooks, and Illinois Poet Laureate was featured in the *Chicago Sun-Times* (Nov. 11, p. 14) for her Pulitzer Prize-winning work *Annie Allen*, which, the paper reported, "Captures era of bias." She is pictured with fellow-poet and playwright Langston Hughes in the article.

Caxtonian Elmer Gertz has been nominated for Lincoln the Lawyer Award, to be presented by the Abraham Lincoln Association on February 12, 2000, in Springfield. Past recipients of this award include Judge Abraham Lincoln Marovitz, Judge Robert C. Underwood, Governor James Thompson, Judge Harlington Wood, Jr., and others. It is given to recognize individuals who reflect the character and ideals of Abraham Lincoln in their legal careers.

Caxtonian Jean Larkin became ill while visiting her daughter in California recently, was hospitalized for some time, and will now relocate her residence to California. Her new address is: Jean Larkin, c/o Sheahan, 424 Hazelnut Dr., Oakley, CA 94561. All her Caxton (and DOFOB) friends wish her a speedy recovery and will miss seeing her at Caxton dinner meetings.

Caxtonian Jeanne Goessling, and husband Mick, have moved from Evanston to Minnesota. She writes, "Esco is not far from Duluth, a few miles west of Lake Superior, Hiawatha's "shining big sea water." Our daytime view is of fields and farms, pine and birch, and at night, stars. Stars! In brightly lit Evanston, we hadn't seen the Milky Way in years....We would enjoy hearing from faraway friends, by mail at 127 W. Stark Rd., Esco, MN 55733, or e-mail at graygoose@attglobal.net."

Caxtonian William V. Jackson, Senior Fellow at Dominican University, River Forest, IL, recently taught a seminar on international and comparative librarianship at the College of St. Catherine, St. Paul, MN. A frequent lecturer in Europe, Egypt, Australia, and Latin American, Jackson recently completed a 12,000-mile tour of three countries in the Southern Cone: Uruguay, Argentina, and Paraguay. He is, as well, professor emeritus at the University of Texas, Austin.

Bookmarks...

Dinner Program, January 19, 2000

Panel and Presentation

Frank Piehl, Paul Baker and Martin Eberhard

New Technologies for the Book Lovers in the New Millennium

Having concluded the decade so successfully, culminating with the much-acclaimed new Caxton exhibition *Chicago Under Wraps: Dust Jackets from 1920 to 1950* at the Ryerson Burnham Libraries in the Art Institute of Chicago, and our annual Holiday Revels, it may seem strange then to start the new millennium year 2000 on January 19th with dinner, a panel discussion and an exhibit entitled "New Technologies for the Book Lover in the New Millennium." Many of our members now buy, sell, and search on the Internet and The Caxton Club website receives a stream of visitors daily inquiring about books and membership.

Therefore, it seemed appropriate to ask our most knowledgeable members; Frank Piehl, Caxton Historian and Caxton Webmaster Paul Baker to review where we are in cyberspace.

Frank Piehl will introduce the program with a testimonial, "How the Internet Changed My Life." He will share the changes in communications with friends and associates, the access to a world of new and almost unlimited information, and the availability of the widest selection of books imaginable. Paul Baker, whose Caxton website was recently described by correspondent from Louisiana as "one of the most handsome I've ever seen (no surprise there)," will share his

work and experiences as a professional and a pioneer in Internet communication.

Plus there will be a presentation by Martin Eberhard co-founder and CEO of Nuvo Media and a review of their *Rocket e Book Pro*. This hand-held electronic "book" at 22 oz. can hold at least 36,000 pages (about 90 novels) of text and graphics.

Chicagoans have played key roles in E-book technology. Our friends, R.R. Donnelley & Sons Company are active leaders in applying their superior skills in maintaining a leadership position in printing on paper and cyber-space for electronic books. Chicago author Scott Turow's newest book *Personal Injuries* will be published simultaneously in both paper and Rocket Edition.

This will be an important, even a vital, meeting for Caxtonians. We hope you'll make our first dinner of the New Year a part of your plans.

*Kenneth Houston Paterson
Vice President and Program Chair*

Luncheon Program

February 11, 2000

Glen Wiche

A Pepsian Show and Tell

Although Glen Wiche lives in 21st Century Chicago and travels frequently to chilly Arctic climes, his spiritual home has always been Restoration England — the England of Sir Isaac Newton and Christopher Wren, Evelyn and Aubrey and Neil Gwyn and Apha Behnm.

Glen has collected Samuel Pepys — the famous diarist and chronicler of that era — for nearly 30 years. On February 11, he will share with Caxtonians and guests his thoughts on Pepys and some of the books and manuscripts from his collection, when he speaks on "Samuel and Elizabeth and Me: A Pepsian Show and Tell."

An antiquarian bookseller for 25 years, Glen is now an independent writer and consultant. He is working on two books, a biography of Charles Maxwell Allen, Lincoln's consul to Bermuda during the Civil War, and a work on sightless authors and blind bibliophiles.

Join your friends for what promises to be an intriguing glimpse at an unusual collection devoted to an immortal diarist.

*Edward Quattrocchi & Leonard Freedman
Co-Chairs*

Don't forget the January Luncheon, on the 14th, which will feature Caxtonian Paul Ruxin, who will speak on the life and writings of another English diarist in a presentation entitled, "Boswell for the Defense."

All luncheon and dinner meetings, unless otherwise noted, are held in the Mid-Day Club, 56th floor of BankOne, BankOne Plaza, Madison & Clark, Chicago. Luncheon and discussion, 12:30pm. Dinner meetings begin with spirits at 5pm, dinner at 6 p.m., lecture at 7pm. BankOne's parking garage, 40 S. Clark Street, offers a special parking rate after 5pm 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 \$8. Members planning to attend luncheons or dinners must make advance reservations by phoning the Caxton number, 1 312 255 3710. Luncheon for members and guests, \$20. Dinner, for members and guests, \$35.