



## Celebrating Dante's Descent into Hell

Edward Quattrocchi

It seems fitting that in this season and in this year of the Millennium, we should celebrate the anniversary of Dante's famous journey in the afterlife. April 8, 2000, marks the 700<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Dante's memorable decent into Hell. With consummate poetic art, the poet memorializes his pilgrimage not only with a detailed road map of his route, but also with a finely calibrated timetable.

Among the numerous morals that the *Commedia* teaches me, none is more relevant than the lesson of learning how to use time wisely. Approaching my 70<sup>th</sup> year, the Biblical allotment of man's life on Earth as noted by Dante, I am sobered to reflect on how I have passed my time. Most of it has been spent in the future and in the past; rarely have I managed to live in the present. Only in my last revisiting of the *Commedia* have I come to understand what Dante says about how time is connected to life here and hereafter.

The significance of time in the poem is evidenced by the more than 40 time references in the first two canticles. Scholars have long debated various points of contention about the exact chronology of the journey, but they generally agree on the approximate timetable. The first canticle, the *Inferno*, opens on Holy Thursday night, April 7, in the year 1300. Dante, the wayfarer, has been asleep in a dark forest, where he has wandered from the righteous path. With Virgil as a guide, he begins his decent into the depths of Hell on Good Friday morning and emerges on Easter Sunday morning. But this is no ordinary Easter; the astronomical convergence of the sun in the equinox with the full moon on the night preceding the anniversary of the crucifixion is Dante's poetic fiction. No weekend in the year 1300 meets all these conditions. Dante believed the common article of faith of his day that God created the world in such an

idealized season of the year. The four-day ascent up the mountain of Purgatory begins on Easter Sunday morning and ends on Wednesday afternoon. Dante then swiftly arises through the nine spheres of Paradise in about 24 hours and returns to earth on Thursday evening, approximately one week after he fell asleep in the woods.

The poet's intention in calling attention to the chronology of the journey is more

than a structural device. Time is a mode of punishment in Hell, a source of hope in Purgatory, and a condition of exultation in Paradise. In Hell the air is timeless, the punishment eternal. The damned suffer the pain of being constantly reminded of their sinful past. They have the special ability to see time future, but they have no concept of time present. When reunited with their bodies on



Title page from Dante Alighieri. Dante con l'espositione di Christoforo Landino, et di Alessandro Vellutello ... Ed. F. Sansovino. Venice: Appresso Giouambattista, Marchiò Sessa, & fratelli, 1564. The first Sansovino edition and the first to contain both the commentaries by Landino and Vellutello. Illustrated with 96 woodcuts reproduced from Francesco Marcolini's edition of 1544, and the first appearance of this woodcut medallion portrait of Dante, signed "AB."

Courtesy Department of Special Collections, University of Chicago Library



# Musings...

## CAXTONIAN

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I first met R.C. Longworth, Senior Writer for the *Chicago Tribune*, by telephone in December 1993. He called my office late one afternoon, and we talked for more than an hour about a year-long, page-one series the *Tribune* had run on children murdered in Chicago. The editorial staff had expected that, by bringing to the public's attention the details of the lives of these children, the killings would slow, if not cease.

They had not, and Dick asked me, "How do you people at the Salvation Army cope with failure like this? You must deal with it all the time." I'm not certain I helped him, but that conversation was the beginning of a spiritual and intellectual bond, which we have nurtured in phone conversations, correspondence, our own writings, and occasional lunches since that time.

He and I had lunch this past month, and, as always, it was one of those delightful times of pasturing thoughts in the ambiance of a growing friendship. He had difficulty, he told me, understanding why someone would pay an exorbitant price for a book just because it was labeled "first edition" when you could get the same book in paperback for a lot less money. I'm not certain I convinced him that book collectors are really *sane*. In fact, I capitulated — I would never want my book collecting friends to know this: I cited, in explanation, the title of Nick Basbane's book, *The Gentle Madness*. Dick seemed more than willing to accept *madness* as an explanation for book collecting, and he confessed a special fondness for the "gentle" idea behind this form of madness.

We then turned to his specialty, the old Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. He was the Moscow correspondent for United Press International from 1965 through 1969. "I learned how to understand," he said, "what a Soviet leader *really* meant when he said this or that. I became so skilled at comprehending the intricacies of 'Soviet-speak' that it became second nature to me. But now," he added with a smile, "I am a specialist with no place to practice my specialty!"

"Why," I asked, "are some former Soviet Block nations making it and others not? Why are places like, say, the Czech Republic or Poland doing so well, when Russia and Bosnia are not?" "That's the

big question," he replied, "in diplomatic and scholarly circles these days." Having visited all of the Soviet Block nations at one time or another on assignment for the *Tribune* or UPI, he knows better than most the essential nature of each.

"Two factors seem important in the developing health of emerging nations these days, as I see it," he explained. "The first is an intellectual association with the Renaissance — some linkage to the development of the scientific traditions, the artistic achievements, the explorations, and the religious freedoms that came from that movement. The second is a connection to Reformation traditions, through which individuals arise to a sense of equality, in which they can say to religious leaders — and, of course, by extension, to political leaders — 'Go to Hell!'"

As we talked, I wondered whether the current floundering of American education is related to its growing alienation from the literary, artistic, and scientific traditions of the Renaissance. Perhaps we gave up more than the study of early drama when we gave up the study of Shakespeare in our schools.

I thought of the vital devotion of many fellow Caxtonians, who love so profoundly the people and ideas of the Renaissance that they have brought to this city in their collections, often at great sacrifice, some of the finest books and manuscripts produced during that enlightened period of human history. I thought, as well, of the important libraries of our city, where the most remarkable products of the human mind are safely kept and, upon occasion, exhibited. I contemplated the subtle role book lovers play in perpetuating the ideas and erudition that made Western Civilization possible and ensures its perseverance. Our *gentle madness*, without a doubt, is better than other kinds of madness prevailing in our world these days.

More mundane matters called Dick and me from our lunch — we had to go back to work. But we are blessed, it seems to me, with a friendship that itself has a certain Renaissance quality to it.

Robert Cotner, Editor

# Florentine Humanism Exhibition at the Newberry

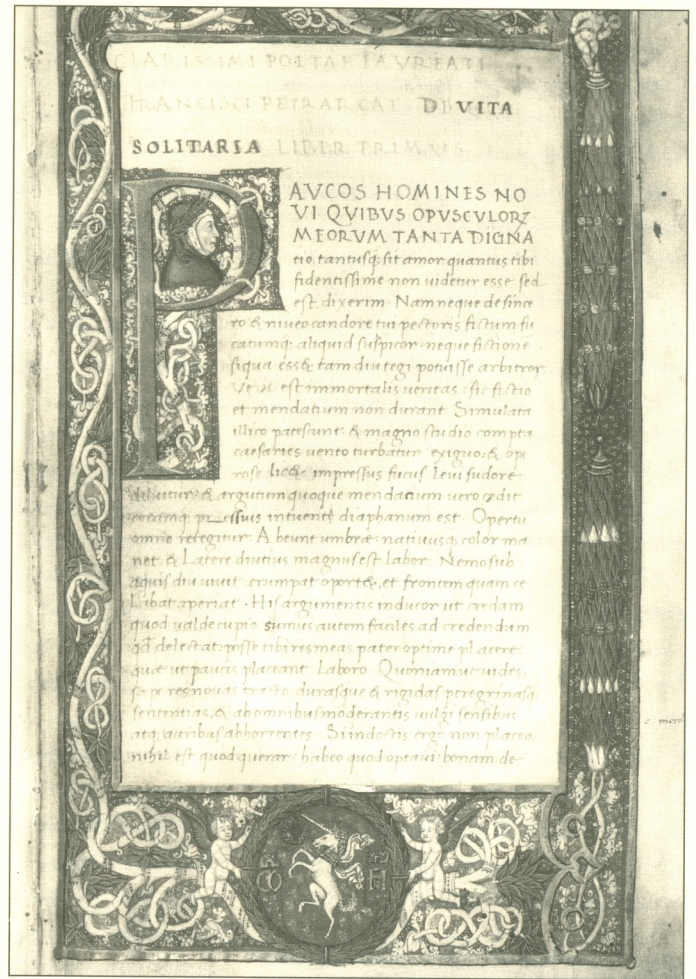
Paul Gehl

The Newberry Library will open a particularly splendid exhibit on April 24, entitled "Florentine Humanism and the Church Fathers." A collaboration between the Italian Ministry of Culture and the Newberry, the exhibit will bring six manuscripts from the Medici-Laurentian Library in Florence to Chicago, where an additional 16 items from the Newberry collection will be added to create a portrait of the religious dimension of Italian Renaissance thought.

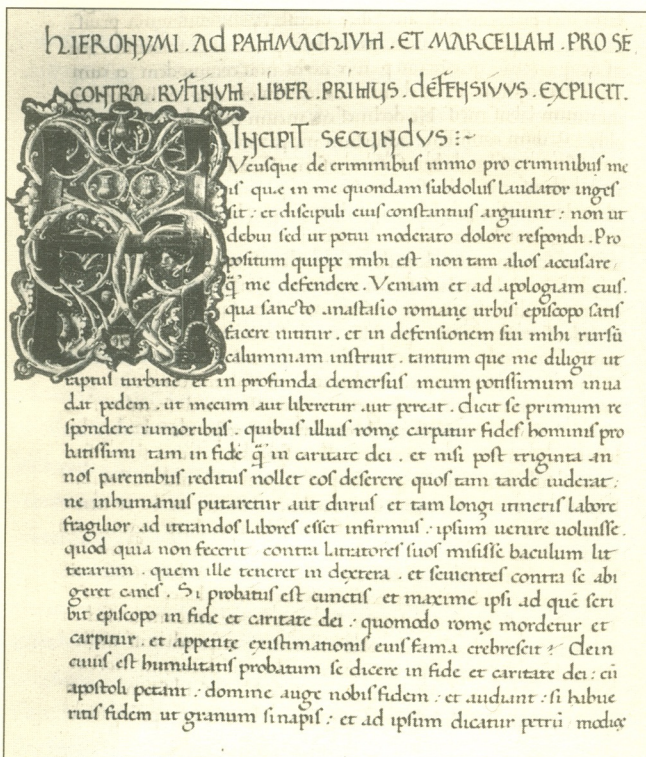
The subject of humanism has particular resonance at the Newberry, which was, some 50 years ago, the incubator for the most influential book on Renaissance history published in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, Hans Baron's *The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance* (1955). Baron (1900-1988) is best remembered today for the controversial thesis of that book, that "civic humanism," as he called it, was born in Florence in a precise span of years from 1396 to 1405, during the critical years of political rivalry between republican Florence and absolutist Milan. The "Baron thesis" is still the starting point for all modern histories of humanism. At the Newberry, however, Baron is remembered for another achievement, for he guided the Newberry's acquisitions in Italian history, and Renaissance studies more generally, from 1948 to 1967. This exhibit will be a tribute to him.

Saturday morning programs on themes relating to the exhibit will be held April 29, May 6 and 20, June 10, and July 15. For a program brochure and further information, phone 312/255-3700. ❖

*Editor's Note: Paul Gehl will speak about the genesis of the exhibit at The Caxton Club's June 9 luncheon meeting, to be held at the Newberry.*



From Petrarch, On the Solitary Life, before 1464.



From St. Jerome, Letters, 1450.



A detail from Lectionary of the Charterhouse of Florence, decorated in the 1470s or 1480s.

All illustrations on this page are courtesy of the Newberry Library.

# The 1481 Edition of Dante's *Commedia*

Edward Quattrocchi

Johann Neumeister printed the first edition of Dante's *Commedia* in 1472 in Foligno, Italy. As the work grew in influence and popularity, several other printers published ever more elaborate editions. Nicholas Alamanus published the most famous of these in Florence in 1481; it is one of the most monumental illustrated printed books of the 15<sup>th</sup> Century.

This edition, unlike Neumeister's first edition, has a commentary by Cristoforo Landino, which is at least five times as long as Dante's poem itself. The designs were conceived by Sandro Botticelli and executed by Baccio Baldini, a Florentine goldsmith and engraver. Botticelli, like Landino and Michelangelo, was a favorite of Cosimo and Lorenzo De Medici. The copy in the Newberry Library and the one owned by Caxtonian Abel Berland are among the finest incunables to be found in any collection.

The influence of this edition on the shaping of the Italian Renaissance, and especially on Michelangelo, is evident from its popular-

ity for almost 100 years after its first printing. Dante's text without Landino's commentary was rare in the latter quarter of the 15<sup>th</sup> Century. At least 10 out of the less than 20 editions printed between 1481 and 1500 had it affixed to the poem.

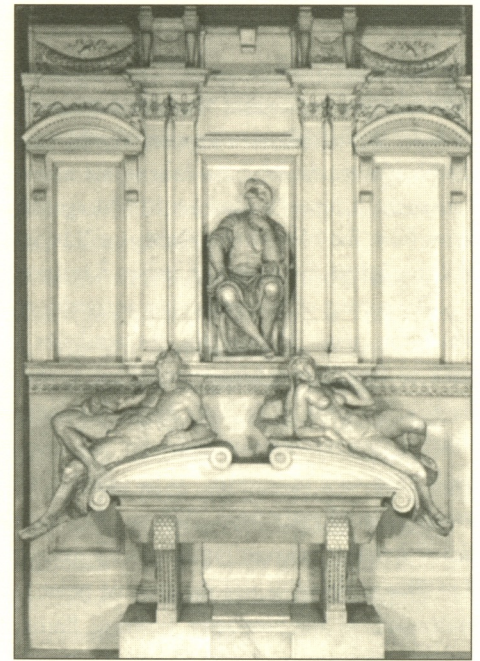
Landino's monopoly on Dante's text was dominant until 1502, when Aldus Manutius published his great edition of the text. Like Neumeister, Aldus included no commentary in his edition. The Aldine press edition set the standard for future generations, but editions of Landino's text continued to be popular; five editions were reprinted in Venice between 1507 and 1536. In fact it endured for more than a century following its first printing. The epithet "Divina" was not added until 1555, when it appeared on the title page of Lodovico's edition.

Landino was a renowned linguist, classical scholar, an expert on Dante, and a prominent member of the Platonic Academy, the cultural circle surrounding Lorenzo De Medici. As a young apprentice in the Medici palace of Lorenzo, Michelangelo probably came in contact with Landino personally before he had ever read the *Commedia*. This edition was destined to gain fame and influence, not only because of Landino's commentary, and Lorenzo's patronage, but also because of the edition's association with Botticelli. ❖

## Dante's Influence on Michelangelo

Edward Quattrocchi

Michelangelo's early biographer, Condivi, maintains that Michelangelo knew Dante's *Commedia* by heart. Most probably he read it alongside Landino's commentary. It seems no coincidence that one of the master's greatest works, the architecture and ensemble of funerary statues in the Medici Chapel in Florence, is a sculpted poem on the themes of the Redemption — Time, Hell, Purgatory — and on the active and contemplative lives.



Monument to Giuliano De Medici, Medici Chapel, Florence.

Although other works of Michelangelo are more famous, none has beguiled art critics more. Ferderck Hartt has written that the Medici Chapel is "one of the most impressive artistic experiences available to man on this planet." The meaning of the profound symbolism of the figures has been the subject of an endless scholarly dialogue for almost 500 years. But most scholars agree that they, more than any other of Michelangelo's works, convey his Neoplatonism, which he probably imbibed from Cristoforo Landino. One of the themes of Dante's *Commedia*, and commented upon extensively by Landino, is the relative merits of the active and contemplative lives. This is a theme that permeates all of Renaissance art and literature. According to the doctrine of the Florentine Academy, as formulated by Landino, the active life, as well as the contemplative life, are the two roads to God, although active righteousness is only the prerequisite of contemplative illumination.

The structure of the interior of the Medici chapel is divided into three planes, suggesting the representation of Hell, Earth and Heaven. The original design included four



Paul Gehl and Ed Quattrocchi study a 1472 first edition of Dante's *Commedia*. This particular copy, now in the Newberry Library, came from the Louis H. Silver collection in 1964. Silver was a Caxtonian and one of the greatest collectors in our generation.

See MICHELANGELO, page 5



Monument to Lorenzo De Medici, Medici Chapel, Florence.

river gods to be placed in the bottom plane. Florentine Neo-platonists identified these gods with the four rivers in Hell: Acheron, Styx, Phlegthon, and Cocytus. In Dante's poem, they demarcate the four stages of punishment of the souls in the *Inferno*.

In the second plane, above the plane originally planned for the river gods, are the remarkable carved figures of four times of the day: Dawn, Day, Dusk, and Night. They represent the destructive power of time on man in the terrestrial world. Michelangelo's own words make this evident: "Day and Night speak; and they say with our fast course we have led to death the Duke Giuliano."

In the third plane are the idealized statues of the ideal prince. On one side of the chapel Lorenzo De Medici, the grandson of Lorenzo, the Magnificent, symbolizes the contemplative prince; across the chapel Giuliano De Medici, the son of Lorenzo the Magnificent, and the uncle of the young Lorenzo, symbolizes the active prince. Above the ducal statues were originally planned statues of the grieving Earth and the smiling Heaven; in the niches flanking the statue of Giuliano, the figure of Earth above Night, the figure of Heaven above Day.

Among the most evocative images of time suggested in Dante's *Commedia*, and commented upon extensively by Landino, occur in Cantos VIII and IX of the *Purgatorio*. Four important junctures in the illumination that comes to Dante upon entering the gates of Purgatory occur at dusk of Easter Sunday, during the night, at dawn, and shortly before noon on Easter Monday. Dante and Virgil enter the gates of Purgatory, and the gates close with a thunderous roar behind them.

Let me suggest the possible influence of Dante on Michelangelo by using Dante's verses in the *Purgatorio* as expressive of Michelangelo's four times of day. Canto VIII of the *Purgatorio* opens at dusk; here is how Dante describes it:

*It was the hour when a sailor's thoughts,  
the first day out, turn homeward, and his heart  
yearns for the loved ones he has left behind,*

*the hour when the novice pilgrim aches  
with love: the far-off tolling of a bell  
now seems to him to mourn the dying day*

In his commentary, Landino interprets this image allegorically as the state of the soul as it enters purgatory, before it has purged itself. He explains that there returns to the soul's memory the past voluptuousness to which he had said "adio." The soul has the desire to purge itself of past sins but has not yet acquired the habit of real virtue in which reason controls appetite.

Canto IX begins a few hours after midnight on Easter Monday and ends a few hours before noon on the same day. Here is the beguiling and ambiguous image of night:

*Now, pale upon the eastern balcony,  
appeared the concubine of old Tithonus,  
arisen now from her sweet lover's arms;*

*her brow was glittering with precious stones  
set in the shape of that cold-blooded beast  
that strikes and poisons people with its tail;*

*and of the hour-steps that Night ascends,  
already, where we were, two had been climbed,  
and now the third was folding down its wings,*

It is sometime between the second and third hour of the night when Dante falls asleep and dreams of an eagle taking him up and setting him down in front of the gates of Purgatory. Instead of an eagle, Lucia, the patron saint of light, comes to carry him precisely at the hour of dawn to the gates of Purgatory.

The canto closes sometime before noon when the pilgrims enter the gates of Purgatory, and the gates shut with a resounding clang behind them. Then the pilgrims see the guardian of the gate of Purgatory with a sword in his hand, so brilliant in reflecting the light that Dante cannot bear to look at it:

*I slowly raised my eyes: I saw that he  
was sitting on the highest step, his face  
too splendid for my eyes — I looked away!*

*And in his hand he held a naked sword;  
so dazzling were the rays reflected thence,  
each time I tried to look I could not see.*

The progress of the pilgrim in these two cantos, from dark to light, or, as Landino explains, from the active to the contemplative life, is a paradigm of the progress of the pilgrim in the *Commedia* as a whole.

Although the meaning of Michelangelo's transcendent sculptures has elicited continual scholarly debate since the time of their creation, to me they represent the theme of resurrection. The four periods of the 24 hours of the day as depicted under the active and contemplative idealized princes suggest that Michelangelo may be depicting to the visitor to the Chapel his symbolic vision of the threshold of the gate of Purgatory. Dante's *Purgatorio*, and particularly Cristoforo Landino's commentary on it, may have inspired this theme and its figures. This interpretation is further supported by the historical fact that Pope Leo, the brother and uncle of the idealized princes, who originally commissioned Michelangelo to carve the statues, was invested as Pope on Holy Saturday. The theme of resurrection for the tombs of the last male members of the Medici family would certainly have won the approval of Leo. ❖

Judgement day, they will be deprived of knowledge of time future, existing in unimaginable suffering for eternity. The timelessness of Hell is one of the most fearsome and subtle aspects of the punishment inflicted on the damned souls. Like Hell, Paradise is a timeless place, but the saved souls exist in eternal bliss.

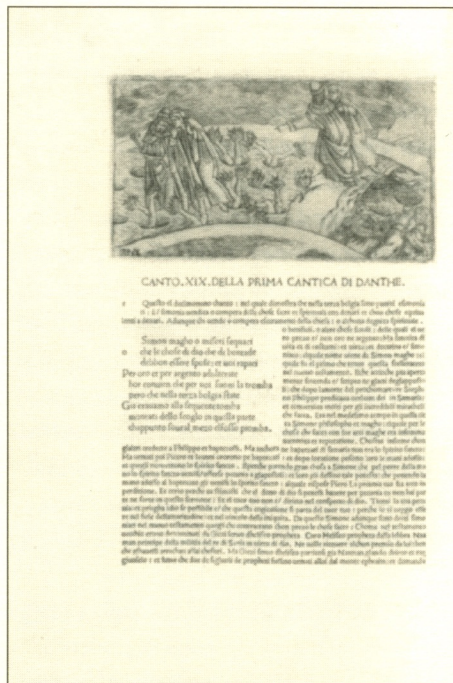
Unlike Hell and Paradise, Purgatory is a transient way station that will cease to exist when the temporal world ends. At that time, the purged souls will be reunited with their bodies and enter timeless Paradise. Souls in Purgatory must serve their allotted time of suffering, but, unlike the damned souls below, they have hope of relief from their pain, which can also be shortened through the prayers of friends and relatives.

The immortal souls in the afterlife do not change their attitude toward time. Virgil, especially, is conscious of time throughout the journey. He continually prods his charge to keep pace, not to waste time and to adhere to a preordained timetable. Unlike the immortal characters in the drama, Dante, the mortal pilgrim, grows in his understanding of the relationships between time, life, and salvation.

Awakening in the dark forest at the beginning of the journey, the wayfarer has to shake off the torpor afflicting his soul. Then he has to struggle with the weakness and lethargy that afflicts his soul throughout the first half of his journey. Upon entering Hell, he is knocked senseless by a violent wind. His first encounter with a damned soul causes him to swoon a second time upon hearing the story of Francesca and Paulo. The well-known story told by Francesca of how she and Paulo were murdered by Paulo's brother while they were engaged in sexual dalliance is the most famous episode in the whole *Commedia*, and it has influenced innumerable writers in the Western Canon ever since the publication of Dante's work.

I am reminded of the pervasive influence of this love story even in The Caxton Club network of literati. In the March issue of the *Caxtonian*, Bob Cotner writes a penetrating

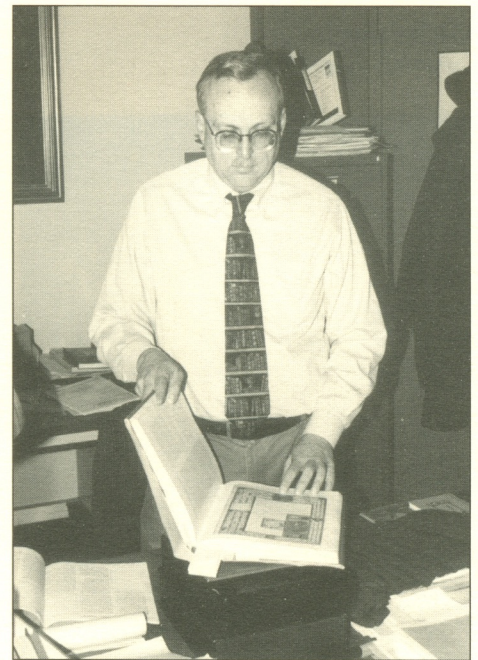
analysis of Robinson Jeffers' poem, "Give Your Heart to the Hawks," in which Lance murders his brother, the lover of his wife Fayne. Cotner recognizes the influence on Jeffers of the Biblical story of Cain and Abel in this tragic tale, but I think Jeffers' more immediate and exact model for the story is Dante's story of Francesca and Paulo. And coincidentally, we were pleased last year to attend the opening night performance of a play entitled *Il Punto* at the Piven Theater in Evanston, written by our friend and neighbor, Dick Cusack. The title of the play refers to the point in Dante's *Paradiso* when the pilgrim sees the point of light, which is God. But the whole plot is a modern adaptation of the Francesca/Paulo adulterous love affair in the *Inferno*. The central character in the plot is



Commentary to Dante's *Commedia* by Christoforo Landino. Florence: Nicolas Laurentii Alamanus, 1481. Priced by Sotheby's in 1994 at \$250,000-400,000.

a Dante scholar who had an adulterous affair with his brother's wife, which has resulted in the brother's murdering his own wife and estranging the brothers.

Judging from the enduring attraction of Francesca's tale to subsequent generations, it is no wonder that Dante, the wayfarer, is overcome with pity for her plight in the



Paul Gehl examines the catalogue for the up-coming Newberry exhibition, "Florentine Humanism and the Church Fathers."

*Inferno*, But Virgil is not sympathetic. He reminds the wayfarer that they have orders from the High Command to adhere to a tight schedule. As they continue down lower, the pilgrim's initial pity gives way to disgust for the treacherous and fraudulent sinners; Virgil continues to warn him not to waste time by looking and listening too long to the obscene behavior and gruesome punishments of the obnoxious souls in the lower reaches.

As they ascend the mountain of Purgatory, Dante again lags behind Virgil, who continues to encourage him to make a greater effort to reach the top. As they climb higher, the pilgrim, purged of the weight of his sins, finds the going easier. At the midpoint in the ascent, upon hearing the name of his beloved Beatrice, he catches up with Virgil and no longer must be prodded to keep pace. When he enters Paradise the ascent to the top seems almost instantaneous, although the time elapsed on earth is approximately 24 hours. Like the saved souls, Dante has learned to live in the present.

From the *Commedia* I have learned the truism that time is life, and that I ought to strive to do a better job of living in the present. Only a few moments of my life have I wished could go on for eternity, none of which has happened in the cattle pit at the Chicago Mercantile Exchange. ❖

# Another birthday party for the immortal sleuth

Jack Stapleton, BSI  
(aka C. Frederick Kittle)



One of the most famous illustrations of Sherlock Holmes, by the artist Frederic Dorr Steele. This first appeared on the cover of *Collier's*, October 1903.

More than 200 people from every direction – in the U.S. and across the world – gathered in New York City on January 14-16, to celebrate, as is done every year, the birthday of Mr. Sherlock Holmes – his 146<sup>th</sup>. But hold on! Sherlock Holmes? He's been dead for many years, hasn't he? No, no. Definitely not! In describing Holmes, our Chicago friend and author, the late Vincent Starrett, easily explained Holmes' immortality: "...never born and thus never can die!"

The unique and indestructible popularity of the greatest of all consulting detectives flows on unabated and more rapidly each year. In commemoration, the sodality of the Baker Street Irregulars was founded in 1934 by journalists, Christopher Morley and Vincent Starrett. Currently there are more than 700 scion groups worldwide. They meet regularly to ponder recondite arguments and to labor over captivating inconsistencies and factual errors gleaned from those charming 60 stories of Sherlock Holmes and his companion, Dr. Watson.

The BSI was arranged for maximum enjoyment and minimum restraints: The by-laws read, "All other business shall be left for the monthly meeting. There shall be no monthly meeting." Our weekend, thus, was

filled with activities related to Holmes and his romanticized period in England: an endowed lecture by Michael Dirda – who spoke at The Caxton Club in 1999; a luncheon honoring William Gillette, the actor well known for his portrayal of Sherlock Holmes; a one-act play, "Sherlock Holmes – the Last Act," performed by Roger Llewellyn; meetings of "The friends of Irene Adler" and of a P.G. Wodehouse group, and, yes, a dealers' room at the Algonquin Hotel, our headquarters, where one could peruse and purchase various and sundry Sherlock Holmes' items.

The main feature, the Friday evening dinner, restricted chiefly to about 200 of the BSI invested members, was exuberant with toasts (traditional and otherwise), the litany of the Musgrave Ritual, the titillating song, "We Never Mention Aunt Clara," enthusiastically rendered by the entire assemblage, and several talks about Holmes. Lasting almost six hours, the dinner featured the same menu as served at the inaugural BSI dinner in 1934.

And so we departed from the weekend stuffed with pleasant memories, contemplating the endless joys of the Holmes cult, with its deliberate self-delusion, and, of course, anticipation of next year's celebration. ❖

A Remembrance . . .

## Eric Gill, Englishman and Typographer

Bruce Beck

Eric Gill was an English writer, an English typographer, an English artist. To those of us who are concerned with the book, he was so completely English that, if he had not actually existed, the creators of English fiction would have been forced to create him. He embodied all of the things great English artists of the time between the two World Wars held to be good, important, and necessary.

In addition, he was a *typographer*, an intellectual, a writer, a creator of the ideal life. But of all these things, that for which he is most remembered and that for which he will be most remembered is as a typographer. He created a number of type faces, but is really remembered for only one, *Perpetua*, which incorporated in one design all of the things he believed about typefaces and the using of typefaces. ❖



Brush-drawn portrait of Eric Gill by Father Edward M. Catich, after a self-portrait engraved on wood by Gill. From Edward M. Catich, *Eric Gill - His Social and Artistic Roots* (1964).

# Bookmarks...

## Dinner Program

April 18, 2000 (the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday in April)

John Sherman

*On Eric Gill*

Somehow it seems appropriate to leave standing in all its simplicity the name Eric Gill as the title of April's Dinner meeting talk by Professor John Sherman of the University of Notre Dame. Gill was a giant who straddled the last part of the 1800s and the first half of the 1900s. He produced an enormous body of engraved work of astonishing variety.

In the words of his nephew Christopher Skelton, "Gill was by all accounts the most prolific and creative English artist of his generation, admired by booklovers, artists, and craftsmen throughout the world. His vision was all-encompassing, equalled by his dedication to a life combining the hand, mind, and eye, and his devotion to God. Humble and grand, religious and erotic, his work is a testimonial to his astonishing energy and creative skill."

We are fortunate to be the first to have a small preview of the international conference on Eric Gill, organized and to be hosted by Notre Dame in November 2000. Professor Sherman earned his undergraduate degree from Ball State University in graphic design in 1979, and his MFA degree from Indiana University in 1981. After teaching at the University of Illinois and Louisiana State University, he joined the design faculty of the University of Notre Dame in 1986.

*All luncheon and dinner meetings, unless otherwise noted, are held in the Mid-Day Club, 56<sup>th</sup> floor of BankOne, BankOne Plaza, Madison & Clark, Chicago. Luncheon and discussion, 12:30pm. Dinner meetings begin with spirits at 5pm, dinner at 6pm, 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, 312 255 3710. Luncheon for members and guests, \$20. Dinner, for members and guests, \$35.*

His presentation will focus on the life and work of Eric Gill and the Guild of St. Dominic. He will show slides of some of the unique items in the Gill collection held at Notre Dame. Join us as we welcome to Chicago our friend and neighbor for an evening's consideration of the life, times, and work of an extraordinary artist.

*Kenneth Houston Paterson  
Vice President and Program Chair*

*Don't forget the April Luncheon, on the 14<sup>th</sup>, when Jim Tomes takes us on "A Serendipitous Journey of Family."*

## Luncheon Program

May 12, 2000

Bill Drendel

*A Codex, a Book Need Not Be*

In a slide presentation and hands-on demonstration, Caxtonian, Councilor, and book artist Bill Drendel will take guests on a short history of the book: before and after the codex. He feels that there is nothing really new to the odd forms the book has been taking recently. He will show that the definition of "book" has been widened to include some very controversial forms.

In his presentation, he will give guests a guided tour through the very earliest forms of what we now realize were the precursors of the codex. Not satisfied by ending up with the *Book of Kells*, or jumping to a William Morris edition of Chaucer, or jumping even farther to the latest bed-side mystery you bought at Borders, he will lead you down the garden ...errr...book path, showing you some of the objects that today are known in the book and arts worlds as "artist" books. He will also not only show you slides of his own work, but will have many examples present for viewing.

Drendel began studying the fine craft of traditional bookbinding at the Newberry Library some 17 years ago. Throughout the years since, he has studied with some of the leading teachers in the field. He has, for the last several years, traveled nationally to teach workshops in the book arts. He is the co-director of Paper & Book Intensive (PBI), an internationally-known, two-week summer workshop in the book and paper arts, which has been taking place for the last 17 years in various locations through the country. Drendel is presently the Director of the Columbia College Chicago Center for Book & Paper Arts

*Edward Quattrocchi & Leonard Freedman  
Co-Chairs*