



An 1839 cartoon, thought to be by Henry Darce, pits President Van Buren (on the ox) confronting a dog with the head of the Duke of Wellington, ridden by Queen Victoria. The figures are variously vexed over the boundary between Maine and Quebec.

The Power of Serendipity

A clipping leads to the discovery of a complex tale out of American history

Thomas Swanstrom

A fairy tale, of arguably Persian or Italian origin, concerns the Princes of Serendip who, whenever they were sent on a mission, found something that looked irrelevant but was actually quite meaningful. The imagined recollections of their travels led Horace Walpole to coin the term “serendipity,” which is defined as “the faculty of finding valuable or agreeable things not sought for.” Here follows my example of serendipity as this relates to maps in disputed American and Canadian territories.

One point I wish to make is that many early

treaties or agreements based on existing maps were probably not worth the paper on which they were written. Mapmakers in general were not explorers and most had never been to the areas covered in their maps. To get around this lack of first-hand knowledge, many mapmakers took the easy way out by simply copying map features drawn by earlier cartographers. This is why California was shown as an island on many maps for more than a century after Juan de Fuca, in 1592, reported the large opening at Baja. This rampant and blind plagiarism is also why two large fictitious islands were shown in Lake Superior for about a century.

In October 2005 I bought a number of books at auction in Bloomington, Illinois. Among them was a book by William Guthrie, entitled *A New Geographical, Historical & Commercial Grammar*, published in 1777. It was not in perfect shape and came in two parts without the author intending it. But then again, I only paid \$14 for the book while the prior owner had bought it for \$100. Even though it was missing one map, it contained 18 pretty decent maps with only minor foxing required. Many of the maps intrigued me, but one of the most interesting was not even part of the book. It was a map of northern Maine, obviously clipped from a newspaper. This map showed northern Maine with three boundaries: one claimed by the United States, one claimed by Great Britain, and one claimed by the King of the Netherlands. On the back of See MAINE BORDER, page 2



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MAINE BORDER, *from page 1*

the map are ads for such things as Butler's Indian Specific which cured colds, coughs, consumption, spitting of blood, asthma, and all disorders of the breast and legs. Since the book was dated 1777, I wondered if the inserted map was from the same time period. Here, serendipity reared its beautiful head and led me in another direction.

The Maine boundary dispute was one about which I had never heard. Most people may be familiar with the controversy in the West concerning the boundary between the Oregon territory and Canada as exemplified in the slogan: "54-40 or Fight." In 1818, the U. S. and Great Britain agreed on joint occupancy of the Oregon Territory, which the British called the Columbia District, a fur-trading division of the Hudson's Bay Company. This didn't end the dispute, since Great Britain wanted the area for its bounty of furs while the U.S. desired control of the Columbia River for a deep-water port on the Pacific.

In 1846, expansionism under the doctrine of "Manifest Destiny" led to political clamoring for a resolution favorable to the U.S. The term "54-40 or Fight" has been mistakenly attributed to James K. Polk's 1844 presidential campaign, but it was not then mentioned and neither was Polk much of an expansionist. If the U.S. had achieved its 54-40 objective, the Oregon territory border would have been set at the southern limits of Russian settlement in North America, substantially north of Vancouver Island.¹

However, Polk backed down and, in the 1846 Treaty of Washington, the border was set at the 49th Parallel extending all the way to the Lake of the Woods. The westernmost boundary was set at a channel in the Juan de Fuca Strait but the treaty neglected to specify which channel. Since there are two channels in the area, the Haro and the Rosario, with 170 square miles of land between them, this created a boundary problem. The dispute was not settled until 1872 when Kaiser Wilhelm I of Germany, as arbitrator, decided that the contemplated strait in the 1846 treaty was the Haro Strait and effectively gave the disputed area to the United States.

By mid-1859 there were 16 American settlers and 18 Hudson's Bay Company employees living in the disputed area. This proximity almost led to war in 1859 when an American farmer, Lyman Cutlar, shot a Bay Company pig rooting in his garden. The pig belonged to an Irishman named Griffin. As the story goes, Cutlar told Griffin to "Keep your pigs out of my potatoes." Griffin was said to reply: "Keep your potatoes out of my pig." Griffin was offered \$10 for the pig but refused, demanding instead \$100. The deepening crisis led to General Winfield Scott being sent to negotiate with the British. This one-shot war went down in history as the Pig War and was

settled by an agreement for joint occupation of San Juan Island. To this day, at the location of the former British camp on the north end of this island, the Union Jack is still raised daily by U. S. government employees.²

There also was the possibility of border problems relating to the purchase of Alaska from Russia. This mainly stemmed from the part of Alaska that thinly stretched down the coast. To counteract problems, Teddy Roosevelt set up a biased panel to decide on the boundaries and, speaking loudly and with a big stick, said that if he didn't agree with the panel's findings, he would send troops into the area to enforce his view of where the boundaries should lie.

Another disagreement related to the boundary of Minnesota. The settlement of this dispute explains



Adapted from a map on Flickr

why Minnesota's northern boundary is not a straight line but juts up into Canada at one point. This deviation from a straight line occurred because the 1783 Treaty of Paris set the boundary from the northwest point of the Lake of the Woods to the source of the Mississippi. Unfortunately, an inaccurate John Mitchell map from 1755 showed the Mississippi as stretching too far north. Thus, the border couldn't go directly west to the Mississippi but instead had to go south to meet it. This created an area called the Northwest Angle, consisting of 596 square miles, only 123 of which are land.

The Northwest Angle is notable for a number of reasons. One is that it is the only part of the U. S. above the 49th Parallel. Though on many maps it appears that Maine is further north, this is simply an optical illusion stemming from the type of map projection used. Another anomaly is that the Northwest Angle is a peninsula and the only part of the U.S. completely surrounded by Canada. There is a customs house at the border but it is unmanned; customs declarations are made by phone from there to the U. S. or Canada. Most of the area is part of the Red Lake Indian Reservation but, according to the 2000 Census, no Indians live there and the 152 inhabitants are all listed as white except for one Hispanic. It also has the last one-room school house in

Minnesota and, in the late 1990s, was a hotbed of secessionist sentiment due to the border crossing rules and laxer fishing regulations in Canada.³

This article mainly concerns the Maine boundary. When I saw the 1831 map, I wondered two things: the date of the map and why the King of the Netherlands would decide a U.S. boundary. Doing some research, I found that the Treaty of Ghent, ending the War of 1812, put a decision as to the boundary in the hands of “some friendly sovereign of state.” Since we were never at war with the Netherlands, obviously the King of the Netherlands was a friendly sovereign. Seventeen years later, in 1831, the King of the Netherlands made his recommendations concerning the boundary. Thus, the small map in the book can be dated as being from about 1831.

The dispute stemmed from grants and treaties dating back more than 200 years. It started in 1621 when James I granted his tutor, William Alexander, all of what is now Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and part of Quebec – an area larger than Great Britain and France combined and the first such grant in the New World.⁴ At the time of this grant, however, much of the territory was still in French hands. To make money on the property, William Alexander sought settlers by making them baronets and selling each six square miles of land for the paltry sum of 150 pounds. Few took advantage of this scheme and those who did were mainly from the lower classes. Though in 1629 Alexander did bring settlers to the grant area, by 1632 they had to leave when the entire area was returned to France.

In 1743, a proclamation by King George II set the boundaries between the colonies but, on purpose, left the wording vague because the area was all wilderness and both colonies would eventually belong to the British – so, who cared? In 1763 at the end of the Seven Years’ War, Great Britain finally got possession of the entire east coast except for a group of islands left to the French for fishing purposes. The inhabited islands in this group, called Saint Pierre and Miquelon, are still part of France and had a thriving alcohol-smuggling industry during Prohibition.

In the original grant and in later treaties, the boundaries were defined as going due



This map, from the author’s collection, repeats the common error of depicting California as an island.

north from the source of the St. Croix River to the highlands where the boundary would be the 45th Parallel going east. The 45th Parallel is thought to be halfway between the equator and the North Pole, but it is off by about ten miles since the earth is not a perfect sphere but bulges at the equator. Boundary surveyors were dispatched by the Americans and the British. Americans became renowned for their liquor capacity and ability to move the line northward⁵, while the British would only work if they got a pint of bitters each day.⁶ The sobering result was that the 45th Parallel Line set by the surveyors was actually off by about a mile, leaving two American forts in British territory.

At the time of the original grant, the area had not been mapped and was completely unexplored. The later treaties had the advantage of being able to use a 1755 map by John Mitchell as a guide. However, this map was completely inaccurate and showed two rather than the actual three area rivers

Mitchell was a physician and botanist, not a mapmaker, and, in fact, made only one map during his lifetime. His commission appeared to be to simply copy other maps. Apparently,

the 1755 map was chosen for its large size and its resulting comprehensive detail as well as Mitchell’s propensity to interpret conflicting claims in favor of the British and by assuming all Iroquois land to be British.

Despite its inaccuracies, this large Mitchell map became the standard reference for most treaties. It was still being used as recently as 1932, judging by legal disputes among some eastern states, and remained an important source of information for fishery disputes well into the 1980s.⁷

One problem was that there was no St. Croix River in the area even though it had appeared on a Champlain map as early as 1613. (There is actually a St. Croix River but it is located further west.)

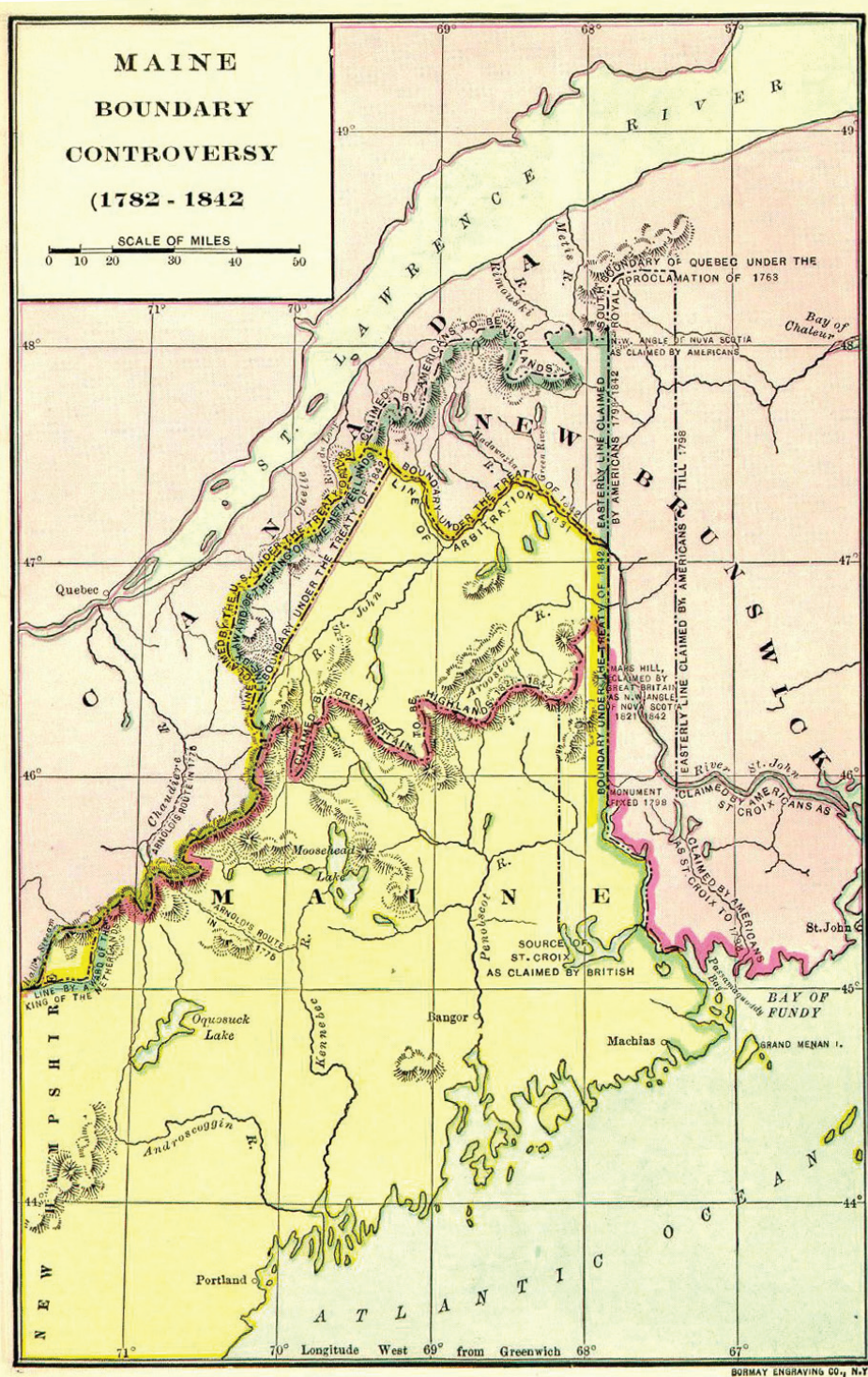
Another problem was the wording of various treaties which said the northern dividing line between the U.S. and Canada should be the “highlands.” Unfortunately, there really aren’t any highlands – as in Scotland – in the area, so the U.S. and Britain would choose different “highlands” as the boundary. The nearest highlands were actually far to the north – which the British believed could easily be used for U.S. invasions of Canada.

With the lack of highlands, reference fell back on treaty definitions of the highlands as being the points where westward-flowing rivers emptied into the St. Lawrence and eastward-flowing rivers emptied into the Atlantic. The problem with this was that many of the rivers flowed into neither body of water. Great Britain confused the issue further when it concluded in 1828 that the Bay of Fundy was not part of the Atlantic Ocean – even though on maps it looks to be an obvious part of the ocean and, in fact, has the greatest difference between low and high tides of any spot on earth.

During the War of 1812, the British took control of eastern Maine with the support of residents wanting to benefit from trade. They had to give it back with the Treaty of Ghent in 1814; yet, if they had kept it, there wouldn’t have been a boundary problem. Of course, British attitudes toward Americans had changed little from the period just prior to the Revolution when Samuel Johnson defined Americans thusly: “They are a race of convicts and ought to be thankful for anything we allow them short of hanging.”⁸

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This map shows the oft-discussed but seldom-drawn "highlands."

MAINE BORDER, from page 3

The disputed area is known as Madawaska, meaning "Land of the Porcupines" in Algonquin.⁹ Madawaska consists of the northwest corner of Madawaska County, New Brunswick, and adjacent areas of Quebec and Maine. It is about three times the size of Rhode Island and was first granted to Charles Aubert de la Chesnaye by France in 1683,¹⁰ but the area was not settled until 1785 when a group of Acadians moved in.

Among the first American settlers in the area was John Baker, described as having a heavy chin and a big nose, and his wife, Sophie Rice, who had earlier been the wife of John's deceased brother. Being a headstrong man, Baker tried to get the French residents to rebel against the British and attempted to stop the mail delivery from Madawaska to Quebec. On July 4, 1827, Baker and Rice dared to raise a flag showing an eagle partially surrounded by stars.¹¹ For this offense they were fined

25 pounds by New Brunswick. A little over a month later, they declared the independence of the Republic of Madawaska and were arrested 45 days later. Baker was sentenced to two months in jail but was allowed to serve his sentence walking around town. His fine was paid by the state of Maine and he was supported in Washington by Henry Clay.¹²

I should note that the Republic of Madawaska still exists, at least in sentiment, and the mayor of the largest town in the area, Edmunston, New Brunswick, also has the honorary title, "President of Madawaska." In the U.S. part of Madawaska, the republic's flag is a French tri-color with a gold star on one of the bars. In the Canadian part, the Madawaskan flag features an American eagle on a white background, surrounded by a half circle of red stars. The eagle represents the U.S. while the white background symbolizes the purity of the Madawaskan scenery and its people. The stars stand for six groups of natives, including Acadians and Indians, while the red represents the blood shed by the founders in clearing the dense forests. Thus, the Canadian part of Madawaska has an American-type flag while the American section of Madawaska has a French-type flag. There is also a coat of arms for Madawaska showing two hands clasped together with a torch arising out.¹³

In 1831, the state of Maine grabbed the bull by the tail when it voted to incorporate the territory of Madawaska into the town of Madawaska, Maine, even though nearly 90% of the territory's inhabitants were French or Acadian who were not really pro-American but simply wanted to be left alone. This action brought the dispute to the attention of Great Britain, New Brunswick, and the United States.

The King of the Netherlands ingeniously solved the boundary problem in 1831 by determining that the "highlands" in the treaties lay on the bottom of the St. John River. In coming to this decision, the king apparently looked at who lived where in the area even though he was told to ignore this. He was influenced by his perceived need for British support to suppress a revolt by his Belgian subjects and also because the King of England was his cousin; in fact, at one time, the King of the Netherlands had been an honorary general in the British Army.¹⁴ To his critics, the king did not do his job since his original mandate was to choose one claim over the other and not offer a compromise. Some Americans were particularly incensed since the American argument appeared stronger.

As for the king's "highlands" boundary, the criticism and spoofing intensified. In 1846, Henry David Thoreau, as mentioned in his book, *The Maine Woods*, came to the "highlands" boundary and described it as level, stagnant and watery. He termed it an "interesting spot to stand on...though you could not sit down there." To Thoreau, if the King of the Netherlands had come to the "highlands" boundary spot, he would have been in his element since it was all water.¹⁵ This view was seconded by John Deane of the Maine legislature who

said that "No person but a Dutchman who had lived among bogs and dikes could possibly come to such a result."¹⁶

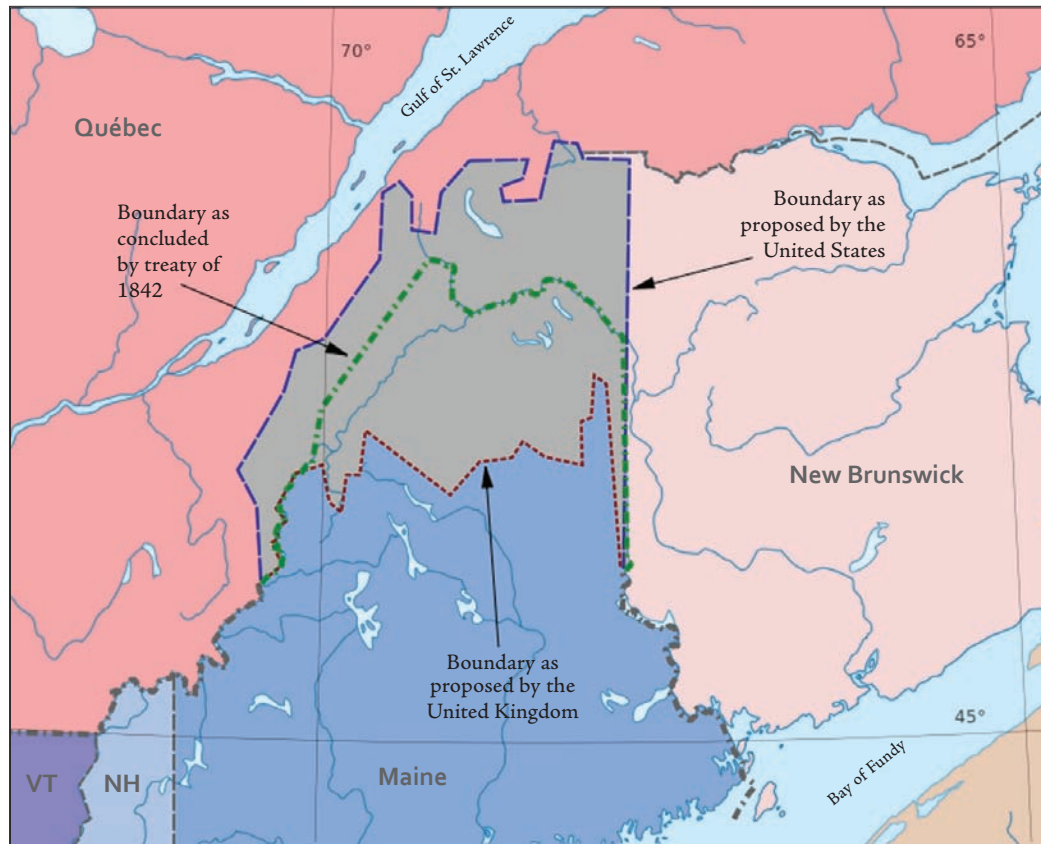
Even though the king's decision gave about two-thirds of the area to the U.S., Great Britain was willing to accept it, a move that many Canadians still consider a disgrace. From the U.S. side, President Jackson reluctantly rejected the king's decision, under pressure from Maine, where it was said that the Netherlands were no longer important since they had lost half their kingdom in the Belgian revolt. Maine later yielded its claims to the U.S. government after its legislature secretly accepted a \$1,250,000 bribe of undivided lands in the territory of Michigan.

In 1839, conflict began in what was called the Aroostook War but also known as the Pork and Beans War, the Coon-Canuck War, and the Lumberjack War.¹⁷ "Aroostook" means "beautiful river" and today Aroostook County is the largest U.S. county east of the Mississippi. The war started in 1839 when New Brunswick sent lumbermen to log in the Aroostook Valley. The valley was important to Britain for several reasons. In the winter, its communications went through the area. A military road there could also halt American expansionist moves. It contained the only remaining stands of white pines that could be used for Royal Navy mast poles; trees at least 24 inches in diameter were marked with

a crow's track called the "Broad Arrow" and reserved for the king's exclusive use.¹⁸ During the American Revolution, one reason why the British navy was battered by the French towards war's end was because most of their masts were worn out and affected by dry rot. To the U.S., the area was of marginal strategic value although there was interest in the vast growths of virgin pine, in rivers that allowed transport to mills and markets, as well as the fertile farmland.

Maine and New Brunswick each mobilized about 10,000 troops, and 50,000 federal troops were sent. On both sides, however, the troops were poorly equipped and with low morale despite Maine's valiant boast of sending its "Red Shirts" against the "Blue Noses" of New Brunswick.¹⁹ The war was unique in that no shots were fired. The only battle was a bar fight in a Houlton tavern where Maine and New Brunswick militiamen drank together, but when the Maine militiamen tried to toast Maine, a few bloody noses and one broken arm resulted.²⁰ General Winfield Scott again peacefully ended a war with only one proven military casualty – a Canadian pig that wandered from New Brunswick into Maine and was bravely captured and eaten by federal troops. One civilian also was killed when a bullet ricocheted off a rock during a peace celebration.

Maine was a continual thorn to the U.S.



government. In 1831, President Jackson ordered the Maine legislature to do nothing that could interrupt or embarrass the U.S. government. By 1840, both Democrats and Whigs stressed foreign problems in order that the electorate forget the politicians' ineptitude on local issues. In this regard they were not alone in the U.S.,

since "twisting the lion's tail" of the British was considered a national sport and most American politicians espoused expansionism. The British, for their part, often got back by "pulling Uncle Sam's beard."²¹

The boundary dispute was finally settled by the Webster-Ashburton Treaty of 1842 which generated its own share of controversy. On the British side, 67-year-old Lord Ashburton was the son of Sir Francis Baring, the head of the Baring banking house, and a man who had financially bailed out William Bingham, one of the largest investors in Maine lumber land. Bingham also had been an American spy in Martinique during the war and became the richest American after the Revolution. As it turned out, both Lord Ashburton and his younger brother married daughters of the Maine investor, Bingham. They were not considered objective by New Brunswick since their land holdings in Maine may have been affected by the American claim.

On the American side, Daniel Webster, a purported anglophile, was a close friend of Lord Ashburton, legal advisor to the Baring firm for a decade, and may have been in the pay of the British. His critics termed him the "god-like Daniel" and "Black Dan."²² Webster had a very imposing presence with a large head, chest, and hands as well as thick eyebrows. One British critic called him a living

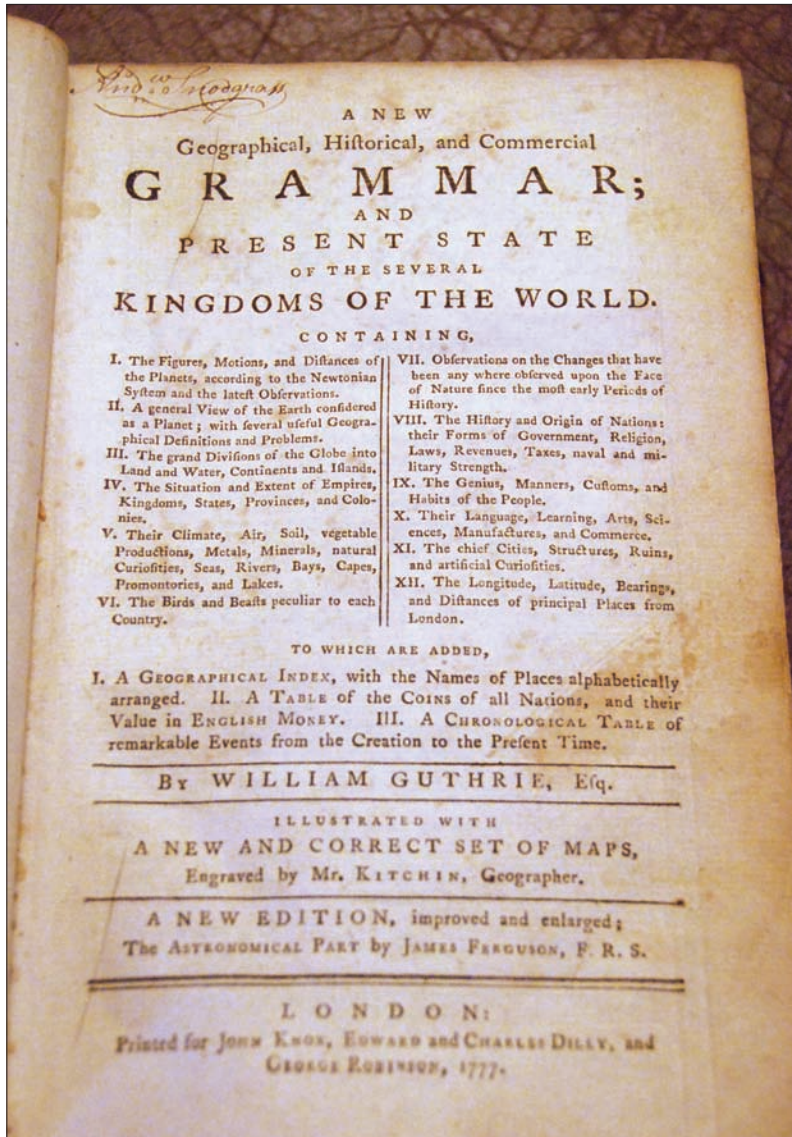
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lie "because no man on earth could be as great as he looked."²³ Webster claimed to want to improve relations with Great Britain and furthered the cause by bribing Maine newspapermen as well as a Maine senator to support the giving up of territory. Charges were later brought against Webster for bribery but he was never convicted.

To prove his point, Webster embraced a dubious piece of evidence. It involved a man named Jared Sparks who later became president of Harvard. In 1842 Sparks was doing scholarly work in Paris and found a note from Benjamin Franklin, written to the Count de Vergennes, that stated he was returning a map after having marked the limits of the U.S. with a strong red line. Following up on this, Sparks searched among the 60,000 maps in the French archives until he found a 1782 map with a strong red line. As it turned out, the line matched exactly the boundary claimed by the British even though it was 100 miles south of the boundary line that had been on maps for 20 years and it would have been quite unlikely that Franklin would have given up that much land.

Of course, there was no proof that this particular map was the one referred to in Franklin's letter. In fact, the map found was one by d'Anville and there is no evidence that the negotiators in 1783 ever looked at a d'Anville map, much less one so small that, according to Disraeli, the red line obliterated much of the state of Maine.²⁴ Sparks may have not been completely objective in this controversy since he was paid at least \$250 by Webster out of what was called the secret service fund. Sparks' later academic career was checkered since he was continually dogged by accusations of editing the letters of others for publication. Later, a map, first owned by Baron von Steuben and later by John Jay, had a red line matching that on the map found by Sparks and thus also supported the British position. It is now thought that the Sparks and Jay maps reflected French claims against



The author's purchase of this volume led to the story herein told.

Great Britain dating from before the French and Indian War.

But Webster said that the finding of the red-line map proved that the treaty gave more to the U.S. than it deserved and thus induced the Maine Commission to accept the treaty, partly with the help of \$15,000 in secret service funds designed to influence public opinion in Maine. In 1839, another map with a strong red line from King George III's library was found in the British Museum but was hidden for three years in the Foreign Office by the Foreign Secretary, Lord Palmerston, a severe critic of any treaty favoring the Americans. This map had the notation: "Boundary as described by Mr. Oswald." Oswald was one of the 1783 negotiators and the map had an endorsement apparently put there by King George III. This later map supported the American rather than the British boundary claim.²⁵ Sir Robert Peel in England was opposed and said that both a Mitchell map

and a 1783 Faden map agreed with the Franklin map and that the boundary was actually 100 miles to the south. Peel's findings may be taken with a grain of salt since the Mitchell map was notoriously inaccurate and Faden was probably not very objective since he was King George's geographer. In addition, Peel sent an associate to Paris who found three maps supporting the American line, which they chose to ignore. But Peel did hit the nail on the head when he said that "nothing can be more fallacious than founding a claim upon contemporary maps."²⁶

A third Franklin map found in Madrid also supported the American position. Spain's archives contained a note from the Spanish minister to the 1783 Paris treaty stating it had been copied from Franklin's map.

Thus, the Americans had maps that supported the British position while the British had maps supporting the American boundary line.

Since Great Britain wanted to improve relations, the treaty boundary was favorable to the U.S. but it still got 900 square miles less in the northeast than that set by the King of the Netherlands in 1831, with Maine being the biggest loser. The U.S. also got the right to carry timber down the St. John's River and received Rouse's Point on Lake Champlain where the U.S. already had a fort nicknamed "Fort Blunder," mistakenly built on Canadian soil during the War of 1812.²⁷ To the American negotiators, Rouse's Point was worth more than all the Maine land lost.²⁸ The Webster-Ashburton Treaty also settled the boundary in the Great Lakes region where the land was considered much more valuable than that lost in Maine since Webster said it had mineral resources. How Webster knew about these mineral resources is uncertain because traces of iron ore were not discovered there until 1875. The treaty did not settle the Oregon dispute, which involved 40 times as much territory as Maine, because Lord Ash-

burton thought that the presence of Indians would hinder American settlers. The Oregon settlement was finally made four years later.

Another early boundary dispute lasted for 59 years and revolved around a section of New Hampshire called the Indian Stream Territory, a remote area where the St. Francis Indians were considered dangerous. This land was originally a grant from the Indian chief, King Philip, a notorious raider before federal legislation in 1790 made it illegal to buy land from Indians. All that King Philip got out of the grant was perpetual hunting and fishing rights and the right to plant four bushels of corn and beans, but no money.²⁹ The argument stemmed from the Treaty of Paris defining this boundary in terms of the northwestern-most headwaters of the Connecticut River. Unfortunately, the Mitchell map used by Benjamin Franklin for the treaty was inaccurate; the Connecticut River actually has three headwaters, thus allowing both countries to claim the area. In 1831 the King of the Netherlands awarded the Indian Stream Territory to Great Britain but this decision was not accepted by the United States.³⁰

This unresolved issue led both Vermont and New Hampshire to collect import taxes for the produce sent over the border and to continue to serve warrants in the area. To compound the problems faced by area inhabitants, Canada ordered Indian Stream men, age 18 to 50, to join the militia. These acts vexed the 300 inhabitants and resulted in the creation of the Republic of Indian Stream which lasted from mid-1832 to 1835. The republic was snuffed out when an attempt to collect a cross-border hardware store debt almost led to war, with two Canadians wounded in the actions. The Webster-Ashburton Treaty later settled this border issue.

I should note that another Maine boundary dispute still exists, that covering Machias Seal Island which both the U. S. and Canada claim, based on the 1783 Treaty of Peace. Imprecise wording in the treaty is again the problem since it defines the province of Nova Scotia as encompassing islands “near to” the coast. Hence both Nova Scotia and Maine could claim this island as being “near to” their respective coasts; in fact it is slightly nearer Maine than Nova Scotia. The consequence is that Machias Seal Island is in a gap between the nautical boundaries of the two countries. The island itself is not much to talk about – 20 acres of rocks and the largest puffin and razor-bill colonies south of Newfoundland. But, it is in the middle of a spectacular lobster fishery

which both countries exploit.

Machias Seal Island was never settled and, in fact, was completely overlooked by both Great Britain and the colonies during the Revolutionary War. Canada’s argument is that it has had a presence since 1832, which, under international law, may be evidence of ownership. Presence here consists of a wild bird sanctuary created in 1944 and a lighthouse, which, although automated, is the only manned lighthouse left on Canada’s Atlantic coast.³¹

The U.S. also had a presence here, during the Civil War, when it was single-handedly captured by Barnaby “Tall Barney” Beal who is said to have left the island to his heirs. “Tall Barney” has been described as being up to seven feet tall and so strong he could bear a dory on his back while carrying 100-pound kegs under each arm. Supposedly, he once punched a horse and killed it. Even now, there is a Tall Barney’s restaurant which is appropriately noted for its “Liars’ Table.” The restaurant is located in Jonesport, Maine, where half the inhabitants are descended from Tall Barney’s 12 children.³²

One part of the border which has its own set of problems is Rock Island, Quebec, where the borderline divides several buildings – a factory, a library, and an opera house, and even splits bedrooms in houses.

There are two morals to these border disputes between the U. S. and Canada which I unraveled so serendipitously. First, one shouldn’t trust the wording of treaties where their authors had no idea what they were talking about, since the early maps were inaccurate and poor guides for setting boundaries. As John Francis Sprague said in a 1910 publication: “Two causes were among the earliest and most predominating which led up to the general confusion: The first was the fact that the English sovereigns were very ignorant of American geography and were perpetually making grants irreconcilably and often grotesquely conflicting, and the second was the instinctive desire of the Anglo Saxon to possess himself of all of the territory of this earth within their reach.”³³ Second, at least in the first half of the 19th century, the best way for the U.S. to settle a border dispute with Canada was to send in General Winfield Scott, the longest-serving general in U.S. history. The results of Scott’s efforts were, at least during this period, bloodless wars, which in two cases resulted in the only military casualty being a pig.

§§

This essay was given, in somewhat different

form, as a lecture to the Chicago Literary Club in November of 2007.

NOTES

- ¹“Oregon Boundary Dispute,” Wikipedia.
- ²“Pig War,” Wikipedia.
- ³“Northwest Angle,” Wikipedia.
- ⁴Henry S. Burrage, *Maine in the Northeastern Boundary Controversy* (Printed for the State: 1919), 4-5.
- ⁵Daniel Doan, *Indian Stream Republic: Setting a New England Frontier, 1785-1842* (Hanover and London: University Press of New England: 1997), 255.
- ⁶Francis M. Carroll, *A Good and Wise Measure: The Search for the Canadian-American Boundary, 1783-1842* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press: 2001), 9.
- ⁷“John Mitchell’s Map,” Osher Map Library and Smith Center for Cartographical Information.
- ⁸George Birkbeck Hill, *Boswell’s Life of Johnson*, Volume II, (Oxford: Clarendon Press: 1964), 312.
- ⁹“Madawaska Down East With a French Accent,” *National Geographic*, Volume 158, no. 3, September 1980.
- ¹⁰Charlotte L’Enentien Melvin, *Madawaska; A Chapter in Maine-New Brunswick Relations*, (St. John Valley Publishing Co.: 1975), 8.
- ¹¹Geraldine Tidd Scott, *Ties of Common Blood: A History of Maine’s Northeast Boundary Dispute with Great Britain, 1783-1842* (Bowie, MD: Heritage Books, Inc: 1992), 44.
- ¹²Father Thomas Albert, *The History of Madawaska* (Madawaska, ME: Northern Graphics: 1985), 93.
- ¹³Daniel B. Martucci, “Flags in Madawaska Then and Now,” presented at the December 1996 meeting, *New England Journal of Vexillology*.
- ¹⁴Howard Jones, *To the Webster-Ashburton Treaty: A Study in Anglo-American Relations, 1783-1843* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press: 1977), 12.
- ¹⁵Henry David Thoreau, *The Maine Woods*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press: 1972), 216.
- ¹⁶Carroll, *Ibid.*, 194.
- ¹⁷“Aroostook War,” Wikipedia.
- ¹⁸Scott, 2.
- ¹⁹Jones, 39.
- ²⁰Jones, 44.
- ²¹Melvin, 27.
- ²²Carroll, 243.
- ²³Jones, 54.
- ²⁴Burrage, 370.
- ²⁵Jones, 104-111.
- ²⁶Burrage, 366.
- ²⁷Jones, 12.
- ²⁸Albert B. Corey, *The Crisis of 1830-1842 in Canadian-American Relations*, (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press: 1941), 169.
- ²⁹Otis Grant Hammond, *Collections of the New Hampshire Historical Society*, Volume 11: *The Indian Stream Republic* (Concord, N.H.: New Hampshire Historical Society: 1915)
- ³⁰Doan, *Ibid.*, 147.
- ³¹“Machias Seal Island,” Wikipedia.
- ³²See obituary of Tall Barney’s descendant, John Barra, *Boston Globe*, November 27, 2004; Leticia Baldwin, “Tall Tales and Local Flavor,” *Boston Globe*, June 27, 2004; Velton Peabody, *Tall Barney, Giant of Beal’s Island* (Williamsville, NY: Periwinkle Press: 1974).
- ³³John Francis Sprague, *The Northwestern Boundary Controversy and the Aroostook War* (Dover, Maine: The Observer Press: 1910), 3.

Remembering Bernie Rost

Caxtonian, collector, bookkeeper, photographer

Thomas J. Joyce

Bernard H. Rost was a quiet but intense man – a bibliophile and an art lover. As big a heart as he had, it is difficult to appreciate that it just stopped working for him on February 12, 2012.

I believe that Bernie was an only child. He lived his adult life in a two-flat brick building on Chicago's West Side, the same building in which he grew up. He never married, but he did recently adopt a cat. His working career was spent as a bookkeeper.

Like most people in the accounting field, Bernie's real life revolved around his outside interests. For Bernie that meant the arts and literature, and where they intersected, including art books. Bernie got to know Oak Parker Dan Burne Jones. Jones compiled *The Prints of Rockwell Kent*. Dan Jones, being older, and an artist, had a big headstart on

Bernie in his appreciation of the artistry of Rockwell Kent, but they enjoyed sharing their enthusiasm. Bernie was able to add to his collection by buying duplicates from Dan.

Another of Bernie's enthusiasms was for the work of Chicago-born book artist Joseph D'Ambrosio (who spoke to the Club in the late 1990s). D'Ambrosio's clever, complicated small press books have devoted collectors, but they were done in such limited numbers that few people have ever seen one, and they rarely come on the market after they were out of print. Bernie was able to acquire half a dozen or more of D'Ambrosio's works, the ones done before he moved to California.

As Bernie filled the bookshelves in his home with books, and his walls with art, he decided he needed to sell some of them, so he became a used bookseller. In that pursuit he joined



The Midwest Bookhunters, now known as The Midwest Antiquarian Booksellers Association. Bernie dabbled at selling by doing some of their book fairs and volunteered for many years as the Treasurer, which was a natural fit for him.

On the strictly literary side, Bernie spent decades as a member of the Dickens Fellowship in Chicago, including several terms as its President. I believe it was a fellow Dickensian who introduced Bernie to the Club and urged him to join.

One characteristic anecdote that mixes several of these themes occurs to me. Back around 1980, I successfully bid to acquire a copy of the Lakeside Press edition of *Moby Dick*, with the Rockwell Kent classic illustrations. As I turned around, I bumped into Bernie, who was standing behind me. "You

got that Kent," he said. "Yes," I responded. "\$800 was a pretty good price for it," offered Bernie, "you must have a customer for it. I was interested in it." "No," I said, "I bought it for stock." Had Bernie bid one more time, he would have won the book, because I had reached my limit. I never told him that, but I was inwardly hoping that he would offer to buy it from me on the spot for a modest profit. Probably he had hesitated to overbid me because we knew each other, as too often happens. In any case he did not buy the book from me, and I do not know if he ever did get a copy of that original.

Bernie was a people person. I do not recall him ever having a harsh word to say about anyone. He had a powerful build, but he never used it imposingly. He preferred to listen and learn rather than to try to make himself the center of attention. His interest in people ran in tandem with his interest in photography, and in dining – preferably with good people and good conversation which was punctuated by his understated witticisms. Truly, I can picture him in my mind's eye as inspiring a

character in a novel by Dickens.

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Bernie was interviewed by Katherine Tutkus in December of 2006 for "Caxtonians Collect." There we learned he joined the club in 2002, nominated by Joe Girardi.

The interview traced the development of Rost's book interests, which grew indirectly from his love of photography. When the New Orleans photographer Clarence John Laughlin visited Chicago, Rost volunteered to be his driver. A friendship developed, which led to Rost visiting Laughlin in New Orleans and being exposed to Laughlin's collection of some 30,000 books.

Photograph by Robert McCamant

CAXTONIAN FOOTNOTES

Wynken de Worde

The theme of March's "Caxtonian Footnotes" was an exploration of some of the tectonic, seismic shocks which have recently occurred or are about to occur in the landscape of the used and rare booksellers of Chicagoland, which left off in the locale of Evanston, which has been the real locus of antiquarian bookselling in the region since the early 1990s.

That was when the late **Terry Tanner** ('86) moved the septugenarian firm of Hamill & Barker from the Wrigley Building tower to the Evanston side of Howard Street, the border between Chicago and the North Shore suburbs.

Another emigre from the Loop to the north side of Evanston is Howard Cohen. At one time Howard had two or three branches of his Booksellers Row business in Chicago, with locations on Lincoln Avenue, Milwaukee Avenue, and in the Loop in the Fine Arts Building. A series of changes caused him to trim his operations in Chicago – closing them in fact. In recent years Mr. Cohen has been operating as Howard's Books in a bookshop which was founded by his previous employee, Connie Reuveni. Not surprisingly, Howard announced a going-out-of-business sale nearly two years ago; but, encouraged by a sudden reversal of fortune, has continued the fight in the same location, just west on Foster Street from the University. He can expect to benefit from the closing of nearby Bookman's Alley.

There are other vintage bookshops in Evanston which can make their proximity very appealing and their eccentricities stimulating. Amaranth Books, on Davis Street, chugs along as an excellent source for quality used books under the operation of its owner, Joe Warnicke. Several blocks east of him is a recent entrant into the market, Market Fresh Books. They have been operating out of a storefront which has had a large "For Lease" sign on its front window. Their unique approach to bookselling is selling books by the pound! Yes. They put your intended purchase on a scale and charge you \$3.99 per pound. That can be a good deal on a mystery paperback, but not so appealing in a used encyclopedia.

It is possible that George & Mary Ritzlin have been accused of selling their antiquarian maps by the ounce, but that would be just a vicious rumor. George gave up the excit-

ing world of Certified Public Accountancy to spend more time with his family as an acclaimed purveyor of antiquarian prints and rare maps. Their current shop is on Central Street just west of the Metra Station.

Dave Wilhelm formerly had a bookshop on Central Street too. His shop, the Book Den, on Chicago Avenue, has been maintained for decades on very affordable items. Recent accolades include, "Great little used book store," and, "An awesome little used book store," and "I love this used book store!" Also just north of Dave on Chicago Avenue is a very recent addition to the scene, and it is just around the corner from Evanston's famed vegetarian restaurant, Blind Faith. The new guy is selling used books and used music, both in the shop and online. It is Squeezebox Books & Music.

Brick and mortar shops deserve extra credit, I think, in these days of tightened economies and tightened belts. People who pay the extra rents to have them in these times when so many have retreated to warehouses and virtual existences of the online world, or "by appointment" firms. Jeff Hirsch is an ABAA seller of literature and photographica in Evanston, who

is more likely to be seen out-of-town at a book fair than to be seen locally. Another home-based business is little-known outside of his specialty, but is famous for specialist materials on violins and stringed instruments of the violin family. Montagnana Books belongs to David Sanders, a cellist with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra for more than 35 years. David sells books, autographs, photographs, and collectibles related to violins and violinists, substantially, now, from his internet site.

Another eccentric bibliopole surely is Mahlon Jones, who lives across the street – not a hundred yards away – from the Chicago Rare Book Center, but has not been noted as having crossed the threshold of CRBC since they moved there seven years ago. Perhaps he only shops next door, at Eureka Antiques, where Bindy Bitterman has specialized in "smalls" and postcards and ephemera for two decades. However, Bindy currently has for sale an antique rolling wooden ladder, with some or all of the piping, if anyone has been wanting one for their home library. This would be a good time to make her an offer.

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DEPARTMENT OF AMPLIFICATION

Imagine my surprise to see the March *Caxtonian* on Ben Hecht and George Grosz. I grew up in New York and was an art student from the age of nine or ten, so I knew about George Grosz from early on.

Everyone knew his work. It was expressive of his strong views about the society that he left behind in Germany. I was both astonished by his themes and attracted to his ability to express ideas through a range of drawings and paintings. He lived in Bayside, Queens, where I attended Bayside High School. Of course I was too young to know him personally, but I recall hearing that he taught classes to a number of women in suburban areas nearby. I think that some of my mother's friends studied with him. (She was a high-end interior designer and my dad was a furniture designer.) A group of my mother's friends met monthly to paint together. Our family "lived" at the major museums and visited art galleries often.

I do recall that my parents went to a showing and sale of his work, probably at his home. I may even have gone with them, but if so it was as a very young child, so I can't be certain. They certainly didn't have funds to buy anything, although they admired him very much.

Grosz must have found living in Bayside far different from interacting with artists in Berlin, or even in Manhattan for that matter. I did know that he went back to Berlin and died tragically. He gave us an insight into life in Berlin that changed our views of the Nazi era.

I was glad to learn about his connection to my adopted home town, Chicago.

– Minna Novick

Book and manuscript-related exhibitions: a selective list

Compiled by Robert McCamant

(Note: on occasion an exhibit may be delayed or extended; it is always wise to call in advance of a visit.)

Art Institute of Chicago, 111 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, 312-443-3600: "Capturing the Sublime: Italian Drawings of the Renaissance and Baroque" (197 Italian works on paper from the late 15th to the cusp of the 19th century assembled by Chicago collector Anne Searle Bent), Galleries 124-127 through July 8. "Schiff Fellowship for Architecture: Selections, 1989-2011" (exceptional projects by young architects selected annually), Gallery 24 through May 20.

Chicago Botanic Garden, Lenhardt Library, 1000 Lake Cook Road, Glencoe, 847-835-8202: "Renaissance Artists: Illustrations of Science and Art" (examines the artists and publishers of featured rare volumes), through May 13. "Rare Seeds, Creative Harvest" (artist books inspired by the rare book collection), opens May 18.

Chicago History Museum, 1601 N. Clark Street, Chicago, 312-266-2077: "Lincoln Park Block by Block" (history, culture, and making of the neighborhood, set on an over-size map), ongoing.

Columbia College Center for the Book and Paper Arts, "2012 MFA Thesis Exhibition," through May 15.

Harold Washington Library Center, 400 S. State Street, Chicago, 312-747-4300: "Teenie Harris, Photographer: An American Story" (the everyday lives of the residents of Pittsburgh's African American neighborhoods), Congress Corridor, through June 4. "Actors, Plays & Stages: Early Theater in Chicago" (memorabilia of the early performances and theaters), Chicago Gallery, Third Floor, through May 15.

DuSable Museum of African American History, 740 East 56th Place, Chicago, 773-947-0600: "Spread the Word! The Evolution of Gospel" (great Gospel singers including Mahalia Jackson and Albertina Walker), through May 20.

Museum of Contemporary Art, 220 East Chicago Avenue, Chicago, 312-280-2660: "First Fifty" (a narrative of the first fifty objects that entered the MCA Collection), opens May 15.

Newberry Library, 60 W. Walton Street, Chicago, 312-943-9090: "Exploration 2012: The 26th Annual Juried Exhibition of the Chicago Calligraphy Collective," through June 8. "Collecting America: How a Friendship Enriched Our Understanding of American Culture," (materials relating to Wright Howes and Everett Graff), Dunlap Smith Gallery, through July 7.

Northern Illinois University Art Museum, NIU Altgeld Hall, DeKalb, 815-753-1936: 4 exhibits exploring the graphic novel, all through May 25. "Francisco Goya: Satirical Caprices" (the 1799 originally bound portfolio of metaphoric caricatures); "Graphic Novel Realism: Backstage at the Comics" (cutting-edge non-traditional, full-length graphic novels); "The Golden Age of Wordless Novels and Artist Illustrated

Books: 1917 - 1951," "The Graphic Novel: An Interpretive History."

Northwestern University, Block Museum of Art, 40 Arts Circle Drive, Evanston, 847-491-4000: "Art on Paper: Prints, Drawings and Photographs from the Block Museum" (works by Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione, Mary Cassatt, Ed Paschke, and others), opens May 11.

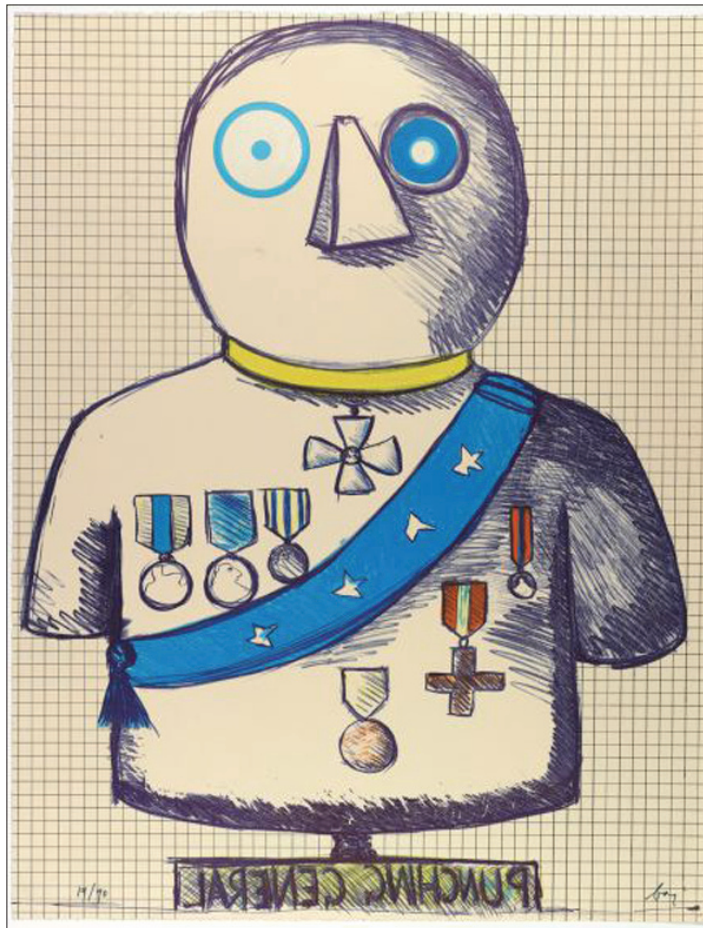
Northwestern University, Charles Deering Library, 1970 Campus Drive, Evanston, 847-491-7658: "Papering Over Tough Times: Soviet Propaganda Posters of the 1930s," Special Collections, through June 15.

Oriental Institute, 1155 East 58th Street, Chicago, 773-702-9514: "Picturing the Past: Imaging and Imagining the Ancient Middle East" (paintings, facsimiles, casts, models, photographs, and computer-aided reconstructions show how the ancient Middle East has been documented), through September 2.

Smart Museum of Art, 5550 S. Greenwood Avenue, Chicago, 773-702-0200: "Feast: Radical Hospitality in Contemporary Art" (artist-orchestrated meals that offer a radical form of hospitality), through June 10.

University of Chicago, Joseph Regenstein Library, 1100 East 57th Street, Chicago, 773-702-8705: "Passover Haggadot from the Stephen P. Durchslag Collection" (the book of prayers, illustrations, and stories recounted on the Jewish holiday of Pesach, in many editions), Special Collections Research Center Exhibition Gallery, through May 12.

Until a replacement exhibit editor is found, please send your listings to bmccamant@quarterfold.com, or call 312-329-1414 x 11.



Museum of Contemporary Art: First Fifty
ENRICO BAJ, PUNCHING GENERAL, 1970

Caxtonians Collect: Norman Jung

Interviewed by Robert McCamant

Norman Jung built a big collection of Chicago books without purchasing many of them in Chicago. "Once in a while when I would come home to visit my family in the south suburbs, I'd make it in to see Terry Tanner or Tom Joyce, but mostly I got my Chicago books from book fairs and booksellers on Long Island," he explained.

It takes a certain amount of cleverness to find Chicago books on Long Island, however. "If you went to a dealer and asked for books about Chicago, he'd say, 'Why would I have books about Chicago? I'm on Long Island!' So the trick was to ask about topics with a Chicago angle. If you asked for books about famous fires, he might have a Chicago fire book. Or if you asked about architecture, he might have a Wright book. He just wouldn't think of them as Chicago books."

What's a "big" collection? "Well, maybe 10,000 titles. Too many to have read them all, that's for sure. But I do know what's in them," he says. The main sub-categories are Chicago history, Chicago as a fictional setting, and literature by Chicago authors.

Jung comes in from Kalamazoo, Michigan to attend Club meetings. For evening meetings, he generally takes Amtrak in on the day of the meeting, spends the night, and then returns to Kalamazoo the next morning. He's also experimenting occasionally with coming to luncheon meetings by driving half the distance to Michigan City and then taking the South Shore for the second half. Among nonresident members, he's one of the most reliable attenders. "Kalamazoo has many advantages as a retirement city. The cost of living is low. It's easy to get around. There are quite a few cultural activities. But I like what's available in a big city, so I'm eager to take advantage of reasons to visit Chicago when they come up."

Jung and his wife Barbro moved to Kalamazoo in 1998, the year after his retirement. He joined the Club in 2001, nominated by Tom

Joyce and seconded by Beverly Lynch. Barbro suffers from glaucoma, and is now legally blind, so she does not travel so often. She was a professional musician (piano and cello), so if the goal includes a musical event, she can often be persuaded to come along.

Jung grew up in south suburban Harvey. He was an undergraduate at Oberlin, where he met Barbro. His next stop was a history master's degree, from the University of Chicago.



(His field was modern American and British history.) Eventually he decided he wanted to be an academic librarian, so he went to library school at Indiana University. Though David Randall was then building up the Lilly Library (the rare book library at Indiana) around the gifts of the Lilly family, Jung managed to miss the siren call of special collections, and instead interested himself in library administration.

That led to a succession of jobs at university libraries in New York state. First came three years at Cornell, then 10 years at State University of New York at Stony Brook, followed by 20 years as Director of the Library and Media Center at State University College at Old

Westbury, which is about 25 miles out on Long Island from Manhattan. (He and Barbro actually continued to live in Stony Brook, which is about 35 miles farther out.) State College, where he spent the most years, is an interesting place. It's basically a liberal arts college, but run by the State University of New York. And because of its location it's sometimes thought of as the "minority" college in the context of the other SUNY campuses.

Jung and his wife have managed to keep themselves busy despite retiring to Kalamazoo. Not surprisingly, they make it to musical events frequently. These might be at Kalamazoo College, The Gilmore (home of international keyboard festivals and awards), or Western Michigan University. But Norman has also volunteered as a tour guide to Frank Lloyd Wright's Usonian houses, eight of which are located in Kalamazoo county, and he is a Friend of the Library at Western Michigan. In fact, he's such a tenacious board member that he's had to leave three boards because of term limits!

Jung thinks he chose to collect Chicago-related books because he so much enjoyed his youth in the Chicago area. "For quite a while I took saxophone and clarinet lessons at the old Chicago Musical College, which was in a building on Van Buren. After lessons, I'd just wander around downtown. The old mansions were abandoned and coming down just north and south of the Loop, and I had fun trying to sneak into them. Sometimes there

were people around, but other times they were untended." He remembers getting into Glessner House, the Kimball mansion, and even the McCormick mansion.

He also knows the secret of how to get your spouse to sign off on the costs involved in a collecting habit. "My wife always liked riding a horse. At first, she was able to ride a friend's horse, but then the friend's horse died and he didn't replace it." In the ensuing negotiations they came to the understanding that however much it cost to keep a horse of her own wouldn't be too much to spend on books.

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Photograph by Edward C. Bronson



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Luncheon: Friday, May 11, 2012, Union League Club

Paul Ruxin

The Club: Exclusive, Historic and (Seemingly) Perpetual

Caxtonian Paul Ruxin returns to our podium with another fascinating and entertaining presentation. In 1764 a truly distinguished group of English gentlemen organized The Club, chiefly to create a forum in which Samuel Johnson's conversational skills would be put on display, for his own entertainment as well as theirs. Through the years, members (never more than 40), have included Joshua Reynolds, James Boswell, David Garrick, Edmund Burke, Adam Smith, William Gladstone, Matthew Arnold, Thomas Huxley, Rudyard Kipling and multiples of Archbishops of Canterbury and prime ministers. What of those blackballed? What of the Club today? All part of the story!

An attorney for 41 years, including Chairman (for 25 years) of Jones Day's specialized energy industry practice, Paul Ruxin serves as Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C. and has a personal collection of the works of Samuel Johnson and James Boswell that is among the most complete private collections in the world.

May luncheon: Union League Club, 65 W. Jackson Boulevard Luncheon buffet (main dining room on six) opens at 11:30 am; program (in a different room, to be announced) 12:30-1:30. Luncheon is \$30. May dinner: Union League Club, 65 W. Jackson Boulevard. Timing: spirits

Beyond May...

JUNE LUNCHEON

On June 8th at the Union League Club, Caxtonian Jerry Meyer will talk on "Juncture of the Sacred and Profane: Eric Gill and British Wood Engraved Illustration Between the Wars."

Dinner: Wednesday, May 16, Union League Club

Michael Winship

The Rise of the Bookstore in 19th-century America
Note Union League location!

Bookstores were a defining feature of the American trade book publishing and distribution system that developed in the United States in the decades before the Civil War and that survived in its basic outline until the turn of the 21st century. This talk will explore the emergence of the independent bookstore as the primary retail outlet for trade books during the 19th century using such evidence as advertisements in book trade periodicals, early directories of the book trade, credit reports, and a gallery of images depicting the interior of 19th-century bookstores.

Michael Winship is Professor of English at the University of Texas at Austin. He has special expertise in publishing and book trade history in the United States before 1940 and has published extensively on American literary publishing. He edited and completed the final three volumes of *Bibliography of American Literature*, for which he received the bibliography prize of the International League of Antiquarian Booksellers. He served as an editor of and contributor to the recently completed 5-volume *A History of the Book in America*.

at 5:00, dinner at 6:00, program at 7:30. Dinner is \$48 and drinks are \$5 to \$12. For reservations call 312-255-3710 or email caxtonclub@newberry.org; reservations are needed by noon Friday for the Wednesday dinner.

JUNE DINNER

Our final dinner meeting of the Club year will be held June 20 at the Union League Club. The speaker will be Andrew Hoyem of San Francisco's Arion Press, speaking on the making of their Folio Bible.