CAXTONIAN

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The Original War and Peace

Rarely seen. Never translated.

R. Eden Martin

War and Peace by Count Leo Tolstoy is generally regarded to be one of the greatest novels ever written. The six volumes of the first book edition in Russian were published in 1868 and 1869. Translations appeared in England and the United States in 1886, and the book has been in print ever since. These first Russian and English editions are highly sought by collectors.

However, the first 250 pages of the Russian version – Parts First and Second, through the Schongraben battle – had appeared earlier, in 1865 and 1866. The first appearance in print was in a Moscow literary journal, *Russian Messenger*; and the second – a book edition put out by the publisher of the literary journal – appeared in Moscow in 1866 with a different title: *One Thousand Eight Hundred and Five* (hereafter "*1805*").

The existence of this early version of the first part of *War and Peace* is well known to Russian literature scholars. But book dealers in their catalogues rarely refer to it. Probably this is because the text of *1805* has never been translated into English. Moreover, copies of the *Russian Messenger* journal from 1865-1866 are not readily available in the West. And the first *book* version of *1805* is almost unobtainable.

What should a collector prefer? That *1805* be so similar to *War and Peace* that it should be regarded as a "first edition" of the great work? Or that it be sufficiently different as to be regarded as a very rare edition of a separate work by the great author?

It is what it is: both similar and different. The structure and flow of the 250 pages of *1805* are the same as in *War and Peace*. But by the time he completed the great work, Tolstoy had gone back and significantly edited those beginning 250 pages, eliminating some long sections and editing others.

Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow

Portrait of Tolstoy by Ivan Kramskoy, 1873

It is said that confession is good for the soul. On that premise, I confess that the first time I tried to read *War and Peace* in English some fifty years ago, I failed. I still have my inexpensive Modern Library edition, all 1136 pages, with the note that I bought it in 1962. I remember that first failure now with embarrassment. I made it through perhaps 30-40 pages before losing any handle on the Russian names. Also, the story didn't seem to be going anywhere. So I put it away.

Some four decades later, the accidents of life led me to take a stab at learning Russian – which in turn led me into collecting Russian firsts. A long-time friend, Prof. Irwin Weil of the Northwestern University Slavic department, told me he had learned Russian by reading Tolstoy and that his first conquest had been *War and Peace*, which took him a summer. I don't think he made it sufficiently clear to me that one needed to know grammar and Russian verbs before reading serious Russian prose.

Anyway, I found a tutor, bought a couple of texts, a dictionary, and a 12-volume paperbound modern set of Tolstoy. It took a while to get to the point of reading with a dictionary. After a couple of years, it seemed like a good idea to spend a month in Russia – to hear the language spoken and to expand my limited vocabulary. Prof. Weil helped make the arrangements.

While I was in St. Petersburg, I met a local book publisher who showed me a book by Tolstoy he had recently published – in Russian – entitled *1805*. It was a reprint of the first book edition of 1866. I had never heard of it and asked if I could buy a copy of the reprint. He told me that it had sold out. Also, having quickly grasped the limits of my proficiency with the Russian language, he volunteered that it had never been translated into English. He said it would be impossible to find a first edition of *1805*.

That's a terrible thing to say to a book collector.

Leo ("Lev") Nikolayevitch Tolstoy (1828-1910) was the heir to two great family traditions. His mother's, the Volkonskys, traced their line back to Prince Ryurik, which placed them higher up the aristocratic ladder than any family other than the Romanovs. The Tolstoys were also highly regarded, but their family tree was fuller than their bank account.

Tolstoy is so well known to Caxtonians and other friends of literature that the usual biographical background may be truncated here.[1]

See TOLSTOY'S FIRST, page 2

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TOLSTOY'S FIRST, *from page 1*

We may pick up the story in early 1863. During the prior decade, following an unsuccessful university career marred by various forms of debauchery and then a five-year stint in the army, Leo had published a number of highly-regarded short works in literary journals. These included his semi-autobiographical recollections in *Childhood, Boyhood,* and *Youth,* and several stories and reports based on his experiences in the Caucasus and the Crimea.

In September 1862 he married Sophia Bers. His biographer, A.N. Wilson, believed that it was this marriage which "produced the Shakespearian alchemy in his imagination." He added:

> [It] is doubtful if [*War and Peace*] would have been written at all had not the manuscripts been copied and stamped with the signature, not of God, nor of Tolstoy, but of his wife."[2]

War and Peace grew out of Tolstoy's decision to write about the Decembrists – the "Dekabristi" – who in 1825 had sought to overthrow, or at least constitutionalize, the Romanov dynasty. Tsar Alexander I had died, and the succession was uncertain. The conspirators and supporting regiments gathered outside the Senate building in St. Petersburg not far from the Neva on December 14, 1825. After some initial confusion, Alexander's son, Nicholas I, easily put them down. Their leaders were executed, and 120 of the conspirators – all members of the gentry – were sentenced to hard labor in Siberia.[3]

One of the Decembrists exiled to Siberia was Tolstoy's mother's relative, Count Sergei Volkonsky. In late 1860 Tolstoy, while traveling abroad, had met the aging Volkonsky in Italy. The old man and many other exiles had been released following an amnesty declared by Alexander II. Tolstoy's biographer Wilson notes that they must have spoken "of the Decembrist Rising and of Volkonsky's sufferings at the hands of the autocracy."[4]

Tolstoy initially conceived the story as having three parts. In reverse chronology, they were: (a) the 1856 return of the exiles from Siberia, (b) the 1825 Revolt itself, and (c) the roots of that uprising, which lay in the exposure of Russian aristocrats and other veterans of the Napoleonic Wars to the political theories of equality and fraternity that were developed during the period of the French Revolution.

The part about the return of the exiles in 1856 was probably started in the latter part of 1860 even before he met Volkonsky in Italy.[5] The lead character, who later became the model for Pierre Bezukhov in *War and Peace* – ponders the changes that have occurred between 1825 and 1856, and muses that "Russia's strength is not in us [the aristocracy] but in the people." Simmons calls this first (though chronologically last) section "an extraordinarily vivid picture of peasant life."[6]

Young Tolstoy (ABOVE) *and Sophia Bers Tolstoy*

Tolstoy's writings about the the return in 1856 were not published either in a journal or as a separate book. A modern Russian edition of Tolstoy's *Collected Works* (Moscow 1958) states that a segment was first published in 1884 in a Russian volume – which I have not seen – entitled *Twenty Five Years, 1859-1884*.[7] Three years later three chapters – 70 pages – appeared in the Seventh Edition of Tolstoy's *Collected Works*, published in Moscow in 1887, where

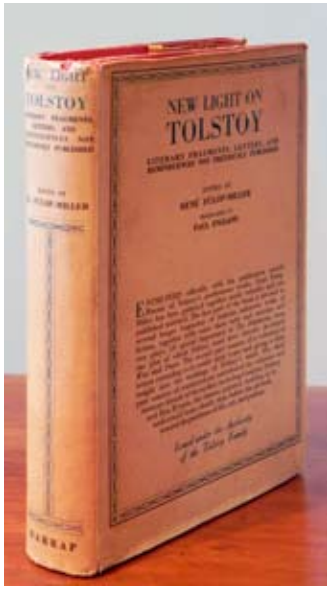
they were presented there as part of a "novel" entitled *Decembrists*, along with a note by Tolstoy, which translates roughly as follows:

> The three chapters of a novel printed here under the title "Decembrists" were written before the author undertook *War and Peace*. At that time he considered writing a novel in which the main characters would be Decembrists, but he did not write it because, trying to recreate the time of the Decembrists, he involuntarily shifted in thought to an earlier time, to the past of his heroes. Gradually before the author were opened deeper and deeper the sources of the occurrences about which he intended to write: families, education, social conditions and the like of these favored people; finally he stopped at the time of the war with Napoleon which he described in *War and Peace*. In the end of that novel are already seen the signs of that excitement which were reflected in the events of December 14, 1825.
>
> Later the author again undertook work on the *Decembrists* and wrote two other beginnings which are here printed at the end of this article.
>
> These are the origins of the proposed parts of the novel which, evidently, are not destined to be written.[8]

As far as I have been able to determine, these three chapters dealing with the return of the Decembrists have never been translated.

A few other fragments on the return of the Decembrists were found, translated, and published in English with the authorization of Tolstoy's daughter in *New Light on Tolstoy*, edited by Rene Fulop-Miller.[9] The editor wrote of these fragments that, "here, as in perhaps no other work, the author has succeeded in portraying the very life and soul of the Russian peasant."[10]

As to the second part of the projected trilogy – the 1825 Revolt itself – no manuscript drafts or fragments have survived.



New Light on Tolstoy *is the only English translation of his writing about the return of the Decembrists.*

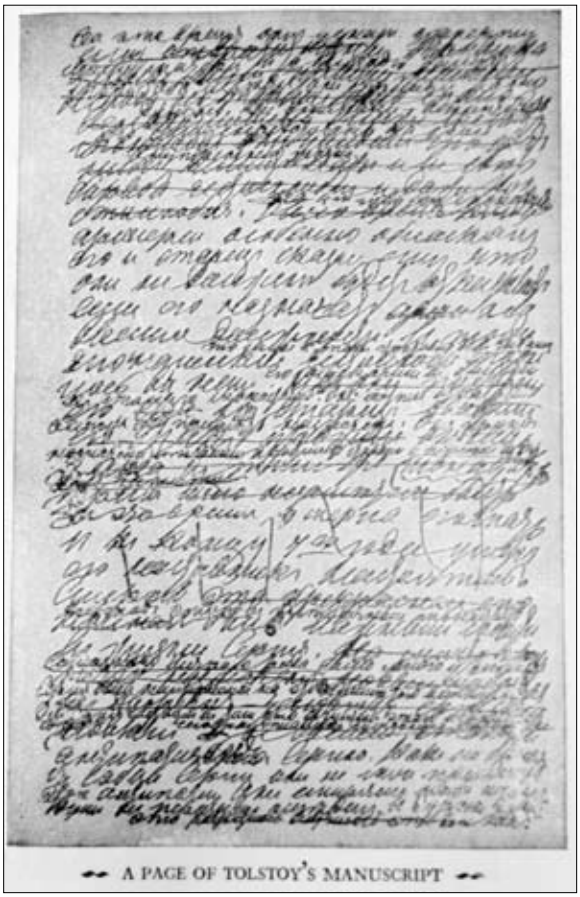
Throughout the summer and fall of 1863, Tolstoy labored on the chronologically-earliest part of his story: the period of 1805-1812. In October 1863 his wife wrote that he intended to call it *The History of 1812*. But his curiosity about historical causation – like that of other Russian intellectuals of that period – led him to keep digging for earlier causes. How could one understand 1812 without knowing what had happened in 1805, or even earlier?

For Tolstoy his family history was intertwined with that of Russia, both in fact and imagination. Thus, his story of the Napoleonic era became fused with that of his family, and his characters were modeled upon members of his family. The Bolkonsky family in the book – particularly the old Prince and his daughter Maria – were modeled on Tolstoy's mother's family – the Volkonskys. (In early drafts they were even named "Volkonsky.") Similarly, several of the Rostovs were modeled on the Tolstoys (and in the first drafts, the Rostov family was named "Tolstoy").[11] Tolstoy's wife's sister became the model for Natasha – the central female character.[12] Perhaps something of Tolstoy himself found its way into the central character, Pierre.

As Tolstoy's biographer Wilson observed, "there is … hardly an incident, conversation or character which the commentators are not able to tell us is 'autobiographical' – and in those passages which are not, … there is a conspicuous flatness."[13]

Thanks to Tolstoy's wife, vast quantities of drafts and scraps of manuscripts were saved and now reside in the Tolstoy Museum in Moscow. Scholars have been unable precisely to determine when particular parts were written.

In 1862 Leo had succumbed to an old weakness – gambling – and had lost 1,000 rubles playing Chinese billiards. Not having the cash, he approached a Moscow publisher, M. N. Katkov, editor of the periodical *Russian Messenger* ("Russkii Vestnik") seeking an advance on an as-yet unpublished novelette, *The Cossacks*. Katkov was happy to oblige. It took Tolstoy most of two years


A PAGE OF TOLSTOY'S MANUSCRIPT

Tolstoy manuscripts are notoriously difficult to decipher.

to satisfy this commitment. He was paid by the page, thus eliminating any bias in favor of brevity.

In September 1862, Leo and Sophia had married; and their first child, Sergei, was born June 28, 1863. Perhaps by mid-1863 the money from the journal publication of *The Cossacks* was running out.

Whatever the combination of causes, about this time Leo began negotiating with Katkov for the serial rights to a book about the origins of the Decembrist Revolt. He demanded and received a deal for 25 rubles per page. Sophia did not like the deal; she thought he should publish the novel in book form because a popular book might have a second or even a third edition.[14]

In September 1864, Tolstoy noted in his diary that he had so far written "about a hundred and twenty printed pages" of his novel.[15] But the first volume of *War and Peace* was not published until early 1868. What were those 120 "printed pages"?

It turns out that they were the early chapters of a novel entitled *One Thousand Eight Hundred and Five*. In December 1864 Tolstoy handed over to Katkov the first 38 chapters – or about 160 pages (up from the 120 he had completed three months earlier). These

See TOLSTOY'S FIRST, page 4

TOLSTOY'S FIRST, *from page 3*

chapters would soon appear under the title *1805* in the February and March 1865 issues of Katkov's *Russian Messenger*.

In January 1865 Tolstoy wrote to his friend, the poet Fet:

> Do you know what surprise I have in store for you?... In a few days *the first half of Part I or 1805* will appear. Please, write me your opinion of it in detail. What I have printed formerly, I now regard only as a trial of the pen and a kind of draft of an opus. What I now print, although I like it more than my former work, seems weak, as *introductions* must be. But what comes after – tremendous![16] (Emphasis supplied.)

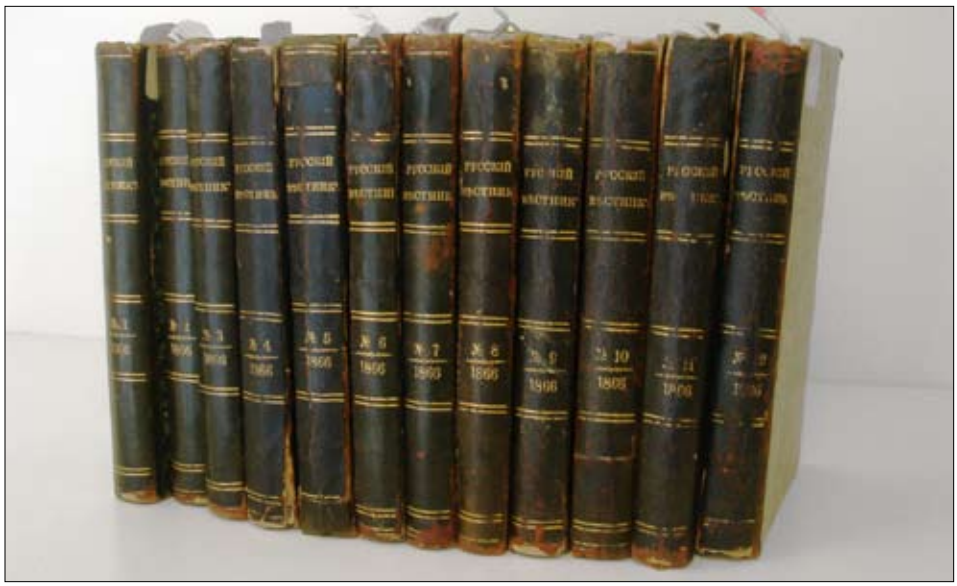
This "first half" of Part I appeared in the February and March 1865 numbers of *Russian Messenger* – the first appearance in print of any part of what became *War and Peace*.

That left the "second half." Tolstoy had referred in his diary in September 1864 to "120 printed pages." My guess is that they were proofs of the first two segments of *1805*: "In Petersburg" and "In Moscow." When the final version appeared, these two segments comprised 130 printed pages. A third segment ("In the Country") appeared in the March 1865 journal – taking that total up to the roughly 160 pages Tolstoy had given Katkov in December.

Throughout 1865 Tolstoy continued to expand his "introduction." On December 21, 1865, according to a note printed in *Russian Messenger*, he completed a fourth segment, entitled simply "War." It takes up the story of the Russian army, led by Kutuzov, in 1805. This fourth segment appeared in *Russian Messenger* over three issues – February, March, and April 1866. This amounted to another 130 pages. The total had thus risen to 290 pages – at 25 rubles per page.

These same *Russian Messenger* monthly journals during 1866 were carrying chapters of another new novel – Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*. Katkov's subscribers were thus being treated to the first appearances in print of two of the most magnificent novels ever written.

Sophia Tolstoy, a businesswoman as well as wife, got her way. She had wanted Tolstoy to publish his work as a separate book; so perhaps it was under her prodding that two months after the last journal chapter of *1805* appeared, Katkov in June 1866 published a separate book edition of *1805*. It comprised all four segments that appeared in the journal



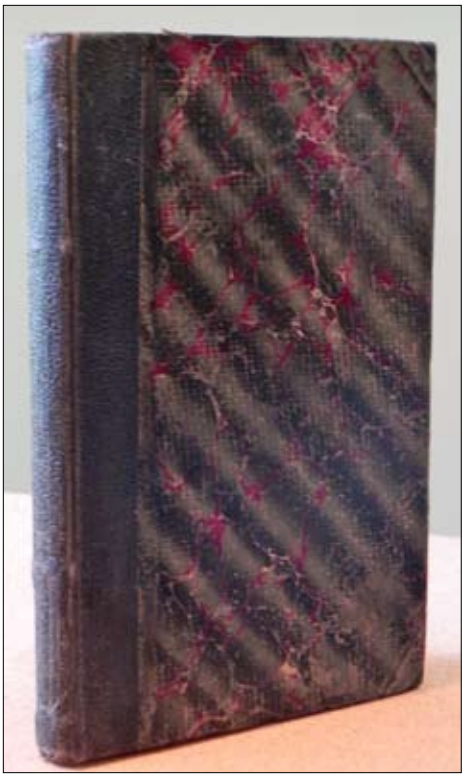
Russian Messenger, *1866*.

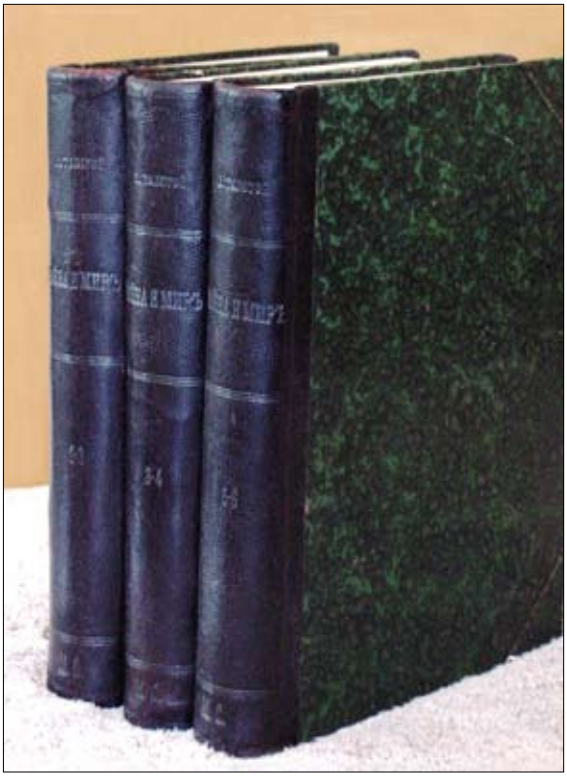
issues in 1865 and 1865 though the type was reset.[17] I was fortunate to be able to obtain a copy of this plain little book about seven years ago from one of the few Western dealers who handle Russian literature.

1805 was the true first edition of any part of *War and Peace*. Oddly, this first book edition is rarely mentioned. Apparently neither Tolstoy's first biographer (Maude) nor his most scholarly one (Simmons) knew about it. Wilson knew about it but gave it only a sentence.[18] Although the number of copies is not known for sure, the 1992 Russian edition of *Tolstoy's Collected Works* contains a note quoting Tolstoy as saying that, "As far as I can remember, I verbally granted the right to print only 500 copies to be printed in 1865."

Apparently few of these copies were saved. Subscribers to the *Russian Messenger* would not have needed to buy the book version; and anyone who did buy the book would have found it superseded when the full *War and Peace* began to be published in 1868. According to the WorldCat records, the only libraries outside Russia holding copies are those at Harvard, the British Library, and the National

The rare book edition of One Thousand Eight Hundred and Five, *published in 1866*.





First edition of War and Peace.

Diet Library in Japan. The only Russian library which reportedly owns a copy is the National Library of Russia. The only copy coming up for auction in recent years was purchased in 1983 at Sotheby's and is likely the copy now in the British Library.

By the time *1805* appeared as a book in the spring of 1866, Tolstoy was already hard at work on the more ambitious superstructure he intended to place on the "foundation." Throughout 1866 he continued to research and write. In May he told his friend Fet that he had come up with a new title: "All's Well That Ends Well."[19] In September he explored the battle field of Borodino, where Kutuzov's army fought Napoleon to a draw in 1812.

Tolstoy (or was it Sophia?) decided to publish the novel personally even though it meant borrowing to do it. He contracted with a printer to issue the volumes separately as they were completed. He also settled on a new title – "War and Peace."[20]

By the summer of 1867, with the new superstructure in draft, Tolstoy returned to the "introduction" and revised the four sections of *1805*. Wilson says he "cut it quite heavily." But a comparison of the texts shows how much of the original text and organization was retained.

The overall work kept expanding as well. In mid-1867 it was advertised as a four-volume work. By the time it was finished, it had grown to six.

Tolstoy's deal with the printer was for 4,800 copies. Each set of the six volumes sold for 10 rubles. Tolstoy had to advance 4,500 rubles to the printer, which required him to borrow 1,000.[21] He also agreed to give 30% of the gross proceeds to the printer and proof reader, which would leave him with about 30,000 rubles – then worth about 50 cents each, roughly $15,000 in 1868 dollars. (A lot of money in 1868.)

The first three volumes were in the bookshops by the end of 1867, though the title page shows the year of publication as 1868. Tolstoy sold the books on subscription. Those who subscribed when it was advertised as a four-volume work apparently received Volumes V and VI free. Volume IV came out in March 1868; Volume V in March 1869; and Volume VI in December 1869. It had taken him six years.

The volumes came from the printer, F. F. Ris, in paper wrappers. Purchasers could bind them in whatever materials and styles they wished. Some sets were bound in six volumes – others in four or three. Soon after the first edition was completed, a second edition in Russian was published. The difference between the first and second editions can be determined by the number of pages in the first four volumes, which were different in the two editions.[22]

The immediate critical assessment of *War and Peace* may be found in the biographies or in general works on the history of Russian literature. The evaluations of two of Tolstoy's great contemporaries are worth reporting here.

Turgenev and Tolstoy had had a falling out which almost led to a duel; and in 1868-69 personal relations continued to be strained. Turgenev's initial assessment as he read the initial volumes was not favorable, but by the time he had completed Volume IV, he wrote: "[N]othing better has been written by anyone in Russia, and probably nothing so good has ever been written …."[23]

Dostoevsky (who never met Tolstoy) described the work, even before he had finished reading it, as "A majestic historical novel! The characters are depicted in all their historical and everyday shortcomings, but the sweep, the great sweep of the epoch captures the heart of the reader. It reeks of the Russian soul."[24]

I once read somewhere that great fiction is a distillation of life. For readers who find that metaphor insightful, one might add that *War and Peace* is to most popular novels as Napoleon Grande cognac is to a decent table wine.

§§

Photographs of books in the author's collection taken by the author.

NOTES

[1] For readers curious to know more and who are unwilling to rely entirely on Wikipedia, books on Tolstoy abound. One of the best early sources is a biography written by Tolstoy's friend and translator, Aylmer Maude. *The Life of Tolstoy* (Oxford, 1908). A fine scholarly work is Ernst J. Simmons, *Leo Tolstoy* (London, 1949); and A.N. Wilson's more recent *Tolstoy* (New York, 1988) is well worth reading.
[2] Wilson, 210.
[3] Zetlin, Mikhail, *The Decembrists*, New York, 1958.
[4] Wilson, 158, 211; Simmons, 280.
[5] Tolstoy's letter to Alexander Herzen, March 20, 1861; Simmons, 290.
[6] Simmons, 290; Wilson, 212.
[7] Note of Editor N. Akorov, 398.
[8] Vol. II, 491.
[9] London, 1931.
[10] p. viii.
[11] Wilson, 221.
[12] Simmons, 293.
[13] Wilson, 209.
[14] Simmons, 299.
[15] Wilson, 220; Simmons, 292.
[16] Simmons, 302.
[17] Wilson, 238.
[18] Wilson, 238.
[19] Simmons, 304.
[20] Simmons, 304-05; Wilson, 245.
[21] Simmons, 304-05; Wilson, 245.
[22] Edgar Lehrman, *A Guide to the Russian Texts of Tolstoy's War and Peace*, Ann Arbor, 1980, p. viii.
[23] Quoted in Alexandra Tolstoy, *Tolstoy, a Life of My Father*, New York 1953, 179.
[24] Quoted in Joseph Frank, *Dostoevsky, The Miraculous Years, 1865-1871*, 279.

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: "Told and Retold: Picture Book Artists from Studio Goodwin Sturges" (works from Studio Goodwin Sturges that pick up the threads of seasoned stories and weave them into new contexts with unexpected twists), Ryan Education Center through October 28. "In Succession: Contemporary Artists' Periodicals" (magazines produced from the 1960s to the present that often seek to function as art rather than scholarship or art history), Ryerson and Burnham Libraries, weekdays only, through July 16.

Newberry Book Fair

Chicago Botanic Garden, Lenhardt Library, 1000 Lake Cook Road, Glencoe, 847-835-8202: "Rare Seeds, Creative Harvest" (artist books inspired by the rare book collection), through August 12.

Chicago History Museum, 1601 N. Clark Street, Chicago, 312-266-2077: "Magic" (a collection of artifacts from across the country that have returned home to Chicago, plus demonstrations and performances), through September 3.

Columbia College Center for the Book and Paper Arts, "Material Assumptions: Paper as Dialogue" (new work created using abaca and cotton paper handmade at the Center), through August 11.

Harold Washington Library Center, 400 S. State Street, Chicago, 312-747-4300: "Art from Chicago's Streets" (a large-scale installation, unauthorized objects and graffiti magazines), Exhibit Cases, Eighth Floor, through August 10.

Columbia College: Material Assumptions
Jessica Stockholder, A Violet Haze (pigmented abaca, pulp painting, collage. Courtesy Dieu Donné, New York)

DuSable Museum of African American History, 740 East 56th Place, Chicago, 773-947-0600: "Places for the Spirit: Traditional African-American Gardens" (over 80 documentary photographs of African-American folk gardens and their creators in the Deep South), opens July 14.

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), through August 19.

Newberry Library, 60 W. Walton Street, Chicago, 312-943-9090: "Newberry 28th Annual Book Fair" (more than 120,000 used books in 70 categories, for purchase), July 26-29. "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.

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), through August 26.

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

Smart Museum of Art, 5550 S. Greenwood Avenue, Chicago, 773-702- 0200: "Uppers and Downers" (reworks the familiar kitchen setup of cabinetry, countertop, and sink into an abstracted version of a massive rainbow arching over a waterfall), through December 16.

University of Chicago, Joseph Regenstein Library, 1100 East 57th Street, Chicago, 773-702-8705: "Medieval Margins and the Margins of Academic Life" (marginalia in illuminated manuscripts from Special Collections paired with photographs of life at the University of Chicago), Special Collections Research Center Exhibition Gallery, through August 10.

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

Visiting Ann Arbor this fall? The Hatcher Graduate Library and the University Museum of Art are planning exhibits that might be of interest: "The Geometry of War: Fortification Plans from 18th Century America," Oct. 15-Feb. 15. "Benjamin West: General Wolfe and the Art of Empire," Sept. 22-Jan. 13. "Visualizing 18th-Century America: Seldom-Seen Treasures from the Clements Library," Sept. 22-Jan. 13. "Proclaiming Emancipation: Slavery and Freedom in the Era of the Civil War," Oct. 15-Feb. 18.

Caxtonians Collect: Brooks Davis

Interviewed by Robert McCamant

In a recent week, Brooks Davis managed to attend two plays and two ballets, hear Madeleine Albright speak, and usher at church. Oh, and he also spent a day and a half in classes at Northwestern. You would not say that he manages to get much "retiring" out of his retirement.

Only one of these events related to his greatest interest, however, which is the American Civil War. One of the plays was titled "OPUS 1861: The Civil War in Symphony," but it actually was a juxtaposition of letters written from soldiers in Afghanistan and Iraq with period songs from 150 years ago.

Though he had learned of the Caxton Club many years ago (from Civil War Roundtable founder Ralph G. Neuman), he didn't join until 2005. It came about because Tom Swanstrom took one of his classes at Northwestern's Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, and Swanstrom told him he ought to join, so he did. In return, Davis got Swanstrom to join the Civil War Round Table.

Davis grew up downstate, in Paxton, Illinois, a small town about 20 miles from Champaign, where his father ran the local drugstore. "It was pretty much the center of the community on Saturday nights," he says. "The fountain drew everyone in for sodas and ice cream." Brooks worked there as long as he lived at home.

"But I chose to go away to Purdue for college," he explained. That lasted only a semester. World War II was on, and it looked like he would be drafted, so instead he went into Naval Aviation, including working on the tarmac at Glenview Naval Air Station, and then studying navigation at the University of Iowa. However, the Japanese surrendered, so Davis never became a navigator.

Just as he was mustering out, his father was killed in an auto/train accident. So rather than return to Purdue, Davis enrolled at the University of Illinois in Champaign, which meant he could pitch in at the drugstore from time to time. In fact, it was a drugstore customer who talked him into majoring in business administration.

After college, he joined a fraternity brother in Montgomery Ward's management training program, which started him on the shipping dock and then led him to assistant manager positions at a succession of stores, each one slightly larger than the previous one. It was time to marry his first wife, Shirley, the mother of his two sons. Soon, however, he jumped to John A. Colby Fine Furniture here in Chicago, where he ultimately became vice president. When the owner sold out without telling him, however, he was soon back at Montgomery Ward, this time becoming the assistant national upholstery buyer.

Photograph by Robert McCamant

Finally, a friend asked him to join Baker Knapp & Tubbs at the Merchandise Mart, where he worked until his retirement in 1991.

Meanwhile, Davis married his second wife, Betsy, a beautiful ballet dancer. (When I visited his apartment, I wondered who was the seeming movie star in a row of pictures in the entry. Turns out, it was Betsy, who died in 2002.) They visited Europe six times, and brought back quite a bit of art. Betsy wasn't very interested in the Civil War, though she would occasionally consent to visit a site while on a vacation, and even came on a couple of Civil War guided tours.

You could say that Brooks Davis (full name: John Brooks Davis) has an interest in the Civil War because of his name. His grandfather, also a Brooks Davis (full name: John Brooks Llywelyn Davis), served in the Union Army towards the end of the Civil War. One of his assignments was as a guard at Fortress Monroe, where Jefferson Davis was awaiting trial on a charge of treason. The two talked, and discovered they were distant relatives. When he left the Fortress, Jefferson Davis gave his grandfather a brass candlestick which lives in the room Davis winkingly calls the "Lincoln Bedroom."

The bedroom is packed with books and memorabilia related to the Civil War and Civil War-related organizations. There are a few pieces of shrapnel from battlefields, some hard tack, a fife, a knapsack from Antietam, hand-painted lantern slides which would have once been used to illustrate a Civil War talk, a handsome engraving of Fortress Monroe where the two Davises met. There is a long ribbon covered with nametags from Civil War tours, certificates of gratitude for talks given, and several plaques from a school I'd never heard of: Lincoln College, of Lincoln, Illinois. It's a two-year liberal arts college, and Davis served on its board for 28 years, including three as its chair. His pet project there was shepherding the development of a Lincoln museum.

Davis manages to pack a wide range of non-Civil-War activities into his days as well. He works on and donates to Episcopal Church activities including supporting St. Augustine College and traveling with the "Bishop's Associates." Theater is also a continuing interest, including a long-running involvement with the Chicago Associates of Stratford, and supporting Shaw Chicago and Chicago Shakespeare. And whenever he gets a chance, he gets up to Michigan to the cottage he has on White Lake. That always includes the 4th of July, when he hosts an old-fashioned celebration including speeches and watermelon.

As we were about to leave the Lincoln bedroom, Davis quietly confessed to me that he had not read all the books in the room. "That proves you're a collector," I said, and we both laughed.

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Dickens' Effects

Michael Gorman

Charles Dickens, as all the world knows, was born 200 years ago this year. Among the best commemorations of the anniversary is Claire Tomalin's vivid and comprehensive biography. After I read it, I went to the few shelves I have of books by and about The Inimitable. They include a tall, slender (50 pages or so) volume called *Dickens Memento*, published in 1884 in London by three publishers and in New York by Scribner. It contains a short introduction by Francis Phillimore; 'Hints to Dickens Collectors' by John F. Dexter (still a useful guide to Dickens' first editions, listed in order of publication); and, most importantly, a facsimile of the catalogue of the great sale of the "pictures, drawings, and objects of art" from Dickens' estate held in London on July 9th, 1870, by the auction house of Christie, Manson, and Woods.

Dickens died on the 8th of June, 1870, in Gad's Hill, his house in Kent. The sale of these effects from the house took place a month later, so there must have been a whirlwind of sorting, packing, transportation, cataloging, and arranging. The auction took place in the 'Great Rooms' at 8, King Street, St. James Square, which Christie's still occupies today. When the day came and the auction began, there was an atmosphere of, in Phillimore's words "intense excitement," and the bidders who labored under it "crowded the room almost to suffocation." Phillimore goes on to tell us that "… the cautious amateur, and still more cautious dealer, alike forgot their prudence, and bid against each other until prices were realised that can be characterised as little less than fabulous and certainly foolish." He attributes the fabled prices and the folly of the buyers to the possessions of the "great master of fiction" being sold under special conditions. The fact is that the sale took place less than a month after most had learned of Dickens' death—a death that had caused massive public displays of mourning in both Britain and the United States occasioned by the passing of a man recognized, in Tomalin's words, as "a national treasure, an institution, a part of what makes England England." Small wonder that otherwise cautious people were prepared to pay inflated prices for the national treasure's possessions.

The Townley Clytie

The 122 items are listed and described in the catalogue. The price paid for each item is given, as is the purchaser's name. The auction realised a total of £9,410 (more than £700,000 or $1,120,000 in today's money).

The drawings included illustrations prepared for Dickens' books by George Cattermole, Charles Stanfield, and various Royal Academicians. The most costly (going for £335 and bought by Dickens' feckless son Charley) was *Roses in a Blue and White Jug* by William Holman Hunt. The paintings included works by Dickens' friends Daniel Maclise (a full length portrait of the great man presented to him on the publication of *Nicholas Nickleby*), Augustus Egg, and Stanfield; the famous Victorian painter William Frith (paintings of Kate Nickleby and Dolly Varden); and by Sir Joshua Reynolds. The highest price (£1039 and 10 shillings) was paid by 'R. Attenborough' for Stanfield's *The Eddystone Lighthouse*. The 'decorative objects' were an assortment—clocks, candlesticks, saltcellars, Dresden figures, lamps, a gong, a compass, stuffed birds, and a French liqueur case with four glass bottles and glasses. The upper- and middle-class Victorian house was overstuffed by modern standards, and none was complete without bronzes, marble busts, and plaster casts. Those owned by Dickens included plaster reproductions of Antonio Canova's *Graces*, *The Dying Gladiator*, and *Cupid & Psyche* as well as of a Roman bust of the nymph Clytie (called the *Townley Clytie* after the 18th century collector Charles Townley), which was bought by 'E. Willson' for 8 guineas. The nineteen pieces of porcelain included punch-bowls, vases, cups, bottles, and "a figure of a Joss … partly enamelled." The six Pickwick punch ladles were made of silver, with handles formed of the figures of Pickwick, Jingle, Winkle, Sam Weller, Old Weller, and the Fat Boy. Three were bought by Charley Dickens for a total of about £90.

The *Dickens Memento*, which I bought four decades and more ago for 2 shillings and 6 pence, is a minor piece of Dickensiana, but a close reading of it throws a light on the life and times of the inimitable Boz in this, his bicentennial year.

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