

THE BOOK

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AAS Announces Two Upcoming Programs in the History of the Book

PLANS ARE BEING MADE for the 2004 summer seminar in the history of the book and for a conference in June 2005, for which proposals for papers are invited. Philip F. Gura will lead the 2004 summer seminar, "Enriching American Studies Scholarship through the History of the Book." He is Newman Distinguished Professor of American Literature and Culture at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and holds appointments in the departments of English and religious studies, and in the curriculum in American studies. "Histories of Print, Manuscript, and Performance in America," sponsored by AAS, will be held June 10-12, 2005, at the Society. The conference will include presentations by invited speakers, panels assembled from among the paper proposals, and a keynote address by Sandra M. Gustafson, professor of English, University of Notre Dame. This lecture by Gustafson, the conference organizer, will be the AAS James Russell Wiggins Lecture in the History of the Book in American Culture for 2005. The invited speakers are Carla Mulford (English, Pennsylvania State University), Jeffrey Richards (literature, Old Dominion University), David Shields (English, University of South Carolina), and David Waldstreicher (history, Notre Dame). There will also be an AAS collections-based needs and opportunities session. The essays presented at the conference will be considered for inclusion in a collection to be edited by Gustafson.

Gura to Lead 2004 Summer Seminar

“**E**nriching American Studies Scholarship through the History of the Book” is the topic for the summer seminar to be held from Sunday, June 20, through Friday, June 25, 2004, at the American Antiquarian Society. Philip F. Gura will be the seminar leader, assisted by guest faculty and members of the AAS staff.

Since its emergence as a separate discipline more than a half-century ago, American studies has contributed significantly to innovative and revisionist scholarship. In this weeklong seminar, participants will consider how the equally interdisciplinary field of the history of the book broadens and enriches topics that traditionally have comprised American studies. Intended as a *practicum*, the seminar will center both on projects and problems that participants bring to the table as well as presentations from the core faculty. The goal is to make participants aware of how knowledge of the materiality of print culture might fertilize their teaching and scholarship.

A historian of childhood, for example, might understand his subject differently if he did not just read contemporary printed sources for documentation of his work but actually analyzed how the process of the publishing circuit might have affected Americans' understanding of childhood. Someone interested in the history of domesticity could come to new conclusions about the significance of home spaces by studying the production and transmission of early, engraved building guides. A scholar inter-

Continued, page 2

Conference Announcement and Call for Papers

Paper proposals of 250-500 words on subjects related to print, manuscript, and performance in British North America and the United States before the twentieth century are invited for consideration for a conference to be held at AAS from June 10 to 12, 2005. The deadline for submitting such proposals is February 1, 2004.

Conference organizer Sandra M. Gustafson has outlined the themes that this conference will address: “The verbal arts in this period manifest a strikingly rich pattern of development and change. From the wide variety of indigenous traditions, through the initial productions of settler communities, to the elaborations of colonial, post-colonial, and national expressive forms, the shifting dynamics of performed, manuscript-based, and printed verbal art capture critical elements of rapidly changing societies. These three varieties of linguistic media competed with, complemented, and shaped one another in unpredictable ways that have only begun to be described.

“Consider some illustrative instances of these intertwined trajectories. Native American and African American leaders developed complex relationships to written and oral media. Many were literate Christians who embraced the authority of the written and printed Word while simultaneously defending and elaborating oral traditions and modes of oratorical performance. In colonial North America and the early United States, racial hierar-

Continued, page 2

SEMINAR *continued*

ested in the rise of antebellum celebrity culture might profit from knowledge of early photography and its uses in book illustration.

Early in the seminar, faculty will introduce the issues, techniques, and tools of history of the book research through presentations on their own work in American studies. In particular, the seminar leader will present sessions on the impact of history of the book scholarship on work in early American religious history and American literature and the impact of photogophy on the book arts. Guest faculty will take up, among other subjects, the various tools now available to those who embark on scholarship in the history of print culture and lead a workshop in which seminar participants have the opportunity for hands-on research in AAS collections. The seminar will also include discussion of student presentations on their own areas of interest and work in progress.

Gura is the author or editor of nine books, including *The Wisdom of Words: Language, Theology, and Literature in the New England Renaissance* (1981), *A Glimpse of Sion's Glory: Puritan Radicalism in New England, 1620-1660* (1984), the prize-winning *America's Instrument: The Banjo in the Nineteenth Century* (1999), and *Buried from the World: Inside the Massachusetts State Prison, 1829-1831, The Memorandum Books of the Rev. Jared Curtis* (2001). Gura's study, *C. F. Martin and His Guitars, 1796-1873*, was published in 2003 by the University of North Carolina Press. He has just completed an interpretive biography, *Jonathan Edwards, America's Evangelical*, forthcoming from Hill & Wang.

More information on the seminar, including the visiting faculty, the fees, and how to apply, may be found on the AAS website, www.americanantiquarian.org.

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The editors welcome all news relevant to the interests of the Program in the History of the Book in American Culture.

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CALL FOR PAPERS *continued*

chies were constructed, staged, and challenged through oral and textual media, playing out in unpredictable and contradictory ways. A similar complexity and a comparable unpredictability emerges when we consider that the rapid spread of print supplemented, but did not displace, manuscript, which remained an important medium of verbal art throughout this period. Indeed, the circulation of literary manuscripts thrived at the moment in the eighteenth century that print culture underwent dramatic expansion. Manuscript permitted the formation of alternative publics and alternate articulations of 'the public' well into the nineteenth century. Manuscript publics existed in a wide variety of functions and forms whose relationships to oral and print media have yet to be fully explored.

"In the nineteenth century the explosive growth of print culture was matched and, often, fueled by the multiplication of performance genres and venues, including dramatic presentations, lectures, readings and recitals, and oratorical performances. Considered by many the natural art form of a republic, oratory was often championed as the medium of American cultural excellence and innovation. Theatrical venues also spread rapidly during these years, adding to the increasingly elaborate performance culture of the United States. For those whose suspicion of the theater lingered, public readings were a popular art form as well as a schoolroom exercise, while the lyceum provided an important venue for touring lecturers to educate and entertain their audiences. The right to claim space on a platform, or to write and circulate a manuscript, or to publish a book had profound implications. As a result, the boundaries of print, manuscript, and performance remained generative, creative sites of production, shaping the development of American literature and politics.

"These examples suggest the need to contextualize the history of the book in the broader field of the verbal arts. In their introduction to the first volume of *A History of the Book in America*, Hugh Amory and David D. Hall observe that book history 'intersects with' discussions of 'orality, writing, and print.' The full story of that intersection remains to be told. This conference will contribute importantly to its telling."

Submissions may be sent as Word or WordPerfect attachments to John Hench at the American Antiquarian Society (jhench@mwa.org). Please include a brief (1-2 page) curriculum vitae. The deadline for receiving the proposals is February 1, 2004. Participants will be notified about acceptances by June 10, 2004.

**CALL FOR PAPERS
DEADLINE
FEBRUARY 1, 2004**

BT Directory, a New Destination on the AAS Website

The Nineteenth-Century American Children's Book Trade Directory is now online at <http://www.americanantiquarian.org/btdirectory.htm>. It was created as an outgrowth of the American Children's Books Project, a cataloguing effort funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities (1985-96). AAS has the most comprehensive collection in the world of American children's books published through 1876. The cataloguing project focused on the Society's collection of children's books published after 1820, including a preeminent collection of McLoughlin Brothers picture books issued between 1858 and 1899. This massive body of bibliographic records that serves as the foundation of the directory also complements d'Alté A. Welch's *A Bibliography of American Children's Books Printed Prior to 1821* (1972). "The importance of this directory is that the early nineteenth century saw a rapid growth in the number and size of cities and that included an increase in the number of people involved in the book trades. A substantial percentage—one-third to one-half of the 14,000 titles catalogued—did not have imprint dates," observes Laura Wasowicz, who joined the AAS staff for this project.

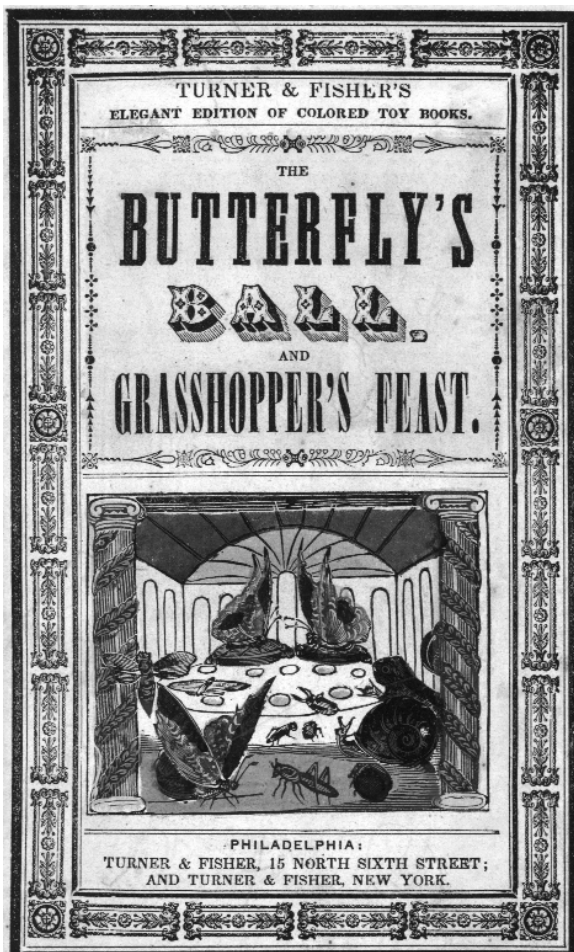
As a result, hours of directory research were needed to establish the production dates for about five or six thousand previously

uncatalogued volumes. For smaller towns that lacked both street addresses and published directories, the books themselves became the sources for pinpointing the activity of a book trades firm within a specific place and time. The dream of extending directory research beyond the publishers' names to all firms and individuals who had participated in the production of each volume, including stereotypers and binders, for example, had to wait for volunteers. This research was started systematically back in 1988 by Jane Holman and continued by Cynthia Taylor, a retiree who came in two or three days a week for over five years to do research on the individuals and firms, and input entries into the directory database.

This comprehensive directory contains 2,600 entries documenting the activity of individuals and firms involved in the manufacture and distribution of books for children in the United States chiefly between 1821 and 1876. Many of the indexed individuals and firms also manufactured and distributed books for adults, so this directory has wide implications for the study of American publishing in general during the nineteenth century.

A straightforward template has been designed for searching and is also useful for studies such as regional printing. As examples, the role index offers a drop-down menu of the following

continued page 4



Turner & Fisher			AuthNum: 126929
Ref:	Turner, H. A.		
Ref:	Turner, Frederick		
Ref:	Fisher, Abraham		
Ref:	Fisher, Alfred J.		
Ref:	Fisher, James		
Ref:	Fisher, W. R.		
Ref:	Fisher & Brother		
Ref:	Fisher & Brothers		
Ref:	Fisher & Denison		
Role:	Publisher, Bookseller		
From:	To: 1840	Address: 11 N. Sixth, Philadelphia	Philadelphia, PA USA
1835			
From:	To: 1849	Address: 15 N. Sixth, Philadelphia	Philadelphia, PA USA
1841			
From:	To: 1836	Address: 90 Division, New York	New York, NY USA
1836			
From:	To: 1837	Address: 36 & 90 Division, New York	New York, NY USA
1837			
From:	To: 1842	Address: 52 Chatham, New York	New York, NY USA
1838			
From:	To: 1849	Address: 74 Chatham, New York	New York, NY USA
1843			

NOTE: Imprint(s) with the following date(s) found in the American Antiquarian Society catalog: 1835-ca. 1849. Turner & Fisher was comprised of members Frederick Turner and Abraham Fisher. The firm was apparently started in 1834; an advertisement for the succeeding firm of Fisher & Denison of New York and Baltimore bears the statement, "established Oct. 1834." The advertisement appears in *A Guide to the City of Baltimore* (1869), p. 173. A Baltimore directory for 1834 was not available. Turner & Fisher printed many colored chapbooks and toy books; many of them were not issued with printed dates. The following individuals/firms were affiliated with Turner & Fisher: H.A. Turner, Alfred J. Fisher, James Fisher, W. R. Fisher, Fisher & Brother, Fisher & Brothers, and Fisher & Denison.

Using the American Children's Book Trade Directory, an AAS data base that has recently been mounted on the Society's website, The Butterfly's Ball and Grasshopper's Feast can be dated to between 1841 and 1849. This is the period when the Turner and Fisher firm was doing business at 15 North Sixth Street in Philadelphia.

terms: agent, amateur printer, amateur publisher, binder, binding designer, bookseller, copperplate printer, editor, electrotyper, engraver, games publisher, importer, ink maker, lithographer, lithotyper (stereotyper), paper dealer, paper manufacturer, printer, publisher, self-publisher, stationer, stereotyper, and wholesale bookseller. The note index contains more information about the entry, such as dates of books issued by the individual/firm that are held at the American Antiquarian Society. This information is particularly useful to track the activity of persons and firms operating in towns and smaller cities for which no published street directory could be located. The note index also includes citations to published sources about the individual or firm whenever available.

This database expands on the idea of creating a bibliography from targeted regional histories. Its originality is in its comprehensiveness, covering a specific type of publishing over a long period of time. It was inspired by electronic databases such as the Scottish Book Trade Index available on the National Library of Scotland's website, and the British Book Trade Index available on the University of Birmingham's website, as well as by printed sources including Sidney F. and Elizabeth S. Huttner's *Register of Artists, Engravers, Booksellers, Bookbinders, Printers and Publishers in New York City, 1821-1842* (1993); Walter Sutton's *The Western Book Trade: Cincinnati as a Nineteenth-Century Publishing and Book-Trade Center, Containing a Directory of Cincinnati Publishers, Booksellers, and Members of Allied Trades, 1796-1880, and a Bibliography* (1961); and Milton Hamilton's *The Country Printer, New York State, 1785-1830* (1964).

Among the individuals who created this resource are former American Children's Books Project Cataloguers S. J. Wolfe, Nancy Noble, Helen Erwin Schinske, and Senior Cataloguers Richard Fyffe and Laura Wasowicz, who performed some of the initial research on the headings found in the database. The aforementioned Cynthia Taylor completed much of the research. Most recently, John Stoffel provided the customized programming needed to recast the directory as a web-based resource, and On-line Services Librarian Caroline Stoffel addressed issues of user applications and computer programming logistics. "The creation of the directory was first suggested by Su Wolfe, who proposed it was both conceivable and necessary. Each colleague named above played an essential role. You just don't scan things into a computer and get a database like this!" notes Wasowicz. "It was a collaborative effort by staff and volunteers."

Laura Wasowicz, Reference Specialist for Children's Literature, and Caroline Sloat

Long Under Wraps, Cataloguing Puzzle Solved

Paper made from Egyptian mummy wrappings, long thought to have been a tall tale, can now be documented as having been produced by the Chelsea Manufacturing Company of Norwich, Connecticut, in 1859. Responding to an appeal for ephemeral items relating to mummies that I posted on the EX LIBRIS listserv on Friday, August 22, 2003, Richard Noble, rare books cataloguer at the John Hay Library at Brown University, sent me a cataloguing record for an 1859 broadside that includes a statement about paper made from mummy wrappings. The broadside is for the September 7 and 8, 1859, bicentennial celebration at Norwich, Connecticut. An advertisement prominently positioned at the bottom of the broadside reads: "Chelsea Manufacturing Company. This paper is made by the Chelsea Manufacturing Company, Greeneville, Conn., the largest paper manufactory in the world. The material of which it is made, was brought from Egypt. It was taken from the ancient tombs where it had been used in embalming mummies."

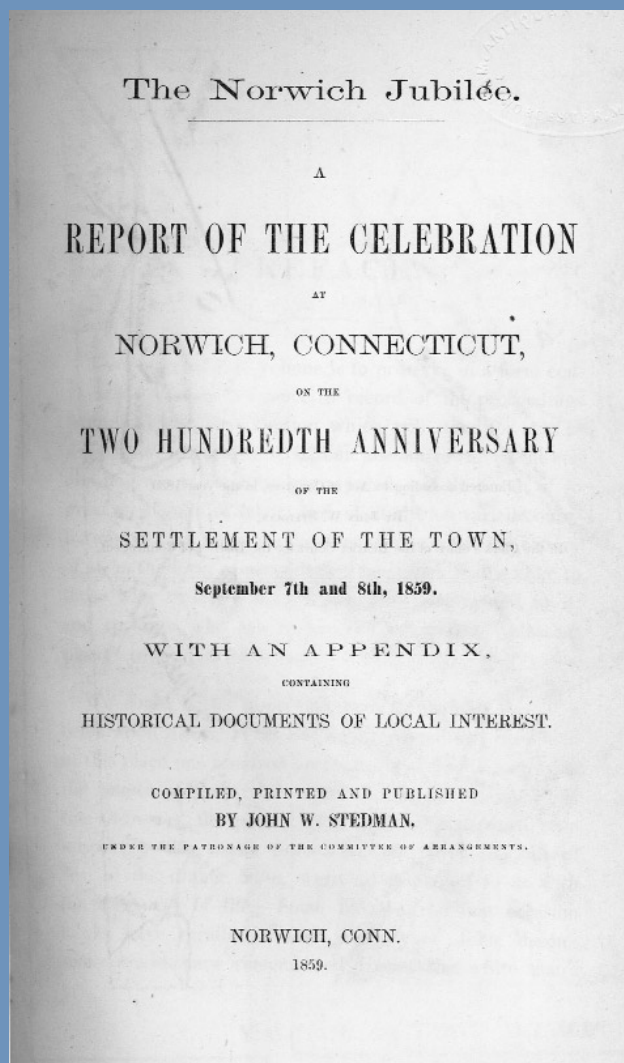
I had stumbled across the topic of mummies in the United States while working with Robert Singerman, Judaica Librarian at the University of Florida, on a bibliography of paper mills and papermaking. Intrigued, I began researching and writing a history of the Egyptian mummy in nineteenth-century America, including a detailed history of the Massachusetts General Hospital's mummy, Padihershef. This "chapter" of my research was recently used as historical background for its exhibition at the George Walter Vincent Smith Art Museum, in Springfield, Massachusetts. For assistance in finding primary sources on mid-century mummy exhibitions, I turned to the EX LIBRIS forum.

The recycling of the mummies' cloth wrappings is the link to papermaking in New England. The ancient Egyptians wrapped their desiccated dead in layers of cotton and linen "bandages," in order to preserve the body for recognition and reanimation by its ka, or soul, in the afterlife. In 1854, in response to a growing concern in England and America over the shortage of domestic rags for the paper industry, Isaiah Deck, a chemist and adventurer, calculated that there were possibly four hundred and twenty million ancient Egyptian mummies, each one swathed in an average of thirty pounds (one hundred yards) of linen and cotton wrappings, which could supply the needs of United States paper mills for about fourteen years, until new modes of paper manufacture could be invented. At a time when domestic rags were selling for six to nine cents a pound, Egyptian rags were selling for three cents a pound.

Information linking Egyptian rags to papermaking was, until now, chiefly anecdotal. Some residents of Gardiner and Westbrook, Maine, know about it. Many of them have parents and grandparents who worked in the mills of S. D. Warren, I. Augustus Stanwood, and the Richardson family, where the

wrappings (and, if local lore is to be believed, maybe even the mummies themselves) were tossed into the beaters to be made into paper. Joel Munsell, in *Chronology of the Origin and Progress of Paper and Paper-Making* (1856), quotes an article from the *Paper Trade Reporter* that claims that mummy rags were first imported to America in 1855. Dard Hunter's histories of papermaking include recollections of mummy wrappings that still retained their curled shapes from being wound around the bodies. Joseph Dane tried to refute the possibility in an article, "The Curse of the Mummy Paper" (*Printing History* 15:2 [1995]). Nicholson Baker included a chapter on the practice in his book *Double Fold: Libraries and the Assault on Paper* (2002), declaring he had actually seen and touched a copy of the July 31, 1856, issue of the *Syracuse Daily Standard* that proclaimed: "Rags from Egypt.—Our daily is now printed on paper made from rags imported directly from the land of the Pharaohs, on the banks of the Nile. They were imported by Mr. G. W. Ryan, the veteran paper manufacturer at Marcellus Falls, in this country, and he thinks them quite as good as the general run of English and French rags."

I have found neither bills of lading nor customs records from the ships that brought the gruesome cargoes. There are also no remaining paper mill records—they may have been recycled in their original mills, or perhaps were donated to one of the paper drives during the two world wars. *Yankee* and other popular magazines periodically publish teasing articles about it. But there is scant proof that such stuff exists. AAS does not have a



This book, such as it is, is wholly a Norwich book. The paper was manufactured at our famous Chelsea Mills, at Greeneville; the printing is my own; and the binding is the work of our well known binders, Lewis and Elisha Edwards. The engraving of the large tent is from a photograph by William H. Jennings; and to the pencil of our talented young townsman, Henry V. Edmond, must be credited the graphic views of the dinner tent and the scene in front of the Wauregan. The page of fac similes was collected by J. Hammond Trumbull, esq., of Hartford.

The cover of the pamphlet describing the Norwich jubilee celebration and the publisher's statement about its production.

copy of the broadside (the only other copy that has been located is at the Connecticut Historical Society), but it does have a book, *The Norwich Jubilee: A Report of the Celebration at Norwich, Connecticut, on the Two Hundredth Anniversary of the Settlement of the Town, September 7th and 8th, 1859*, published in the same time frame as the broadside. The preface states that "the paper was manufactured at our famous Chelsea Mills" without mentioning mummy paper. But given the fact that the Chelsea Manufacturing Company claimed in the broadside advertisement to be making "mummy paper," it is almost certain that the paper on which the book was printed started out as funerary goods of some dead ancient Egyptians.

There is no practical way to ascertain if it is or isn't mummy paper. Microscopic and chemical analysis would show only that the paper was composed of cotton and/or linen fibers; it would not be able to tell its age. To carbon-14 test it would require destruction of part of the item and, as the percentage of mummy rags that made up the original paper slurry at the Chelsea Mills is not known, that type of dating might not be very accurate.

So for now, the book has been catalogued to reflect the probability that it was made from mummy paper and has been placed in the reserve collection with AAS's other rare treasures. Perhaps it should bear the same subject heading Richard Noble placed on the broadside at the Hay Library—"Mummies—Connecticut—Recycling."

S. J. Wolfe

Senior Cataloguer and Serials Specialist

Resources for Reading Studies in the Concord Free Public Library

The Concord Free Public Library has been a recurring figure in AAS's connection to that historic town. Highlighted by Robert A. Gross in "Books and Libraries in Thoreau's Concord: Two Essays" first published in the Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society and issued separately in 1988, the library was one of the sites visited during a field trip taken by the matriculants in the summer seminar directed by Louise Stevenson in 2002. Ed.

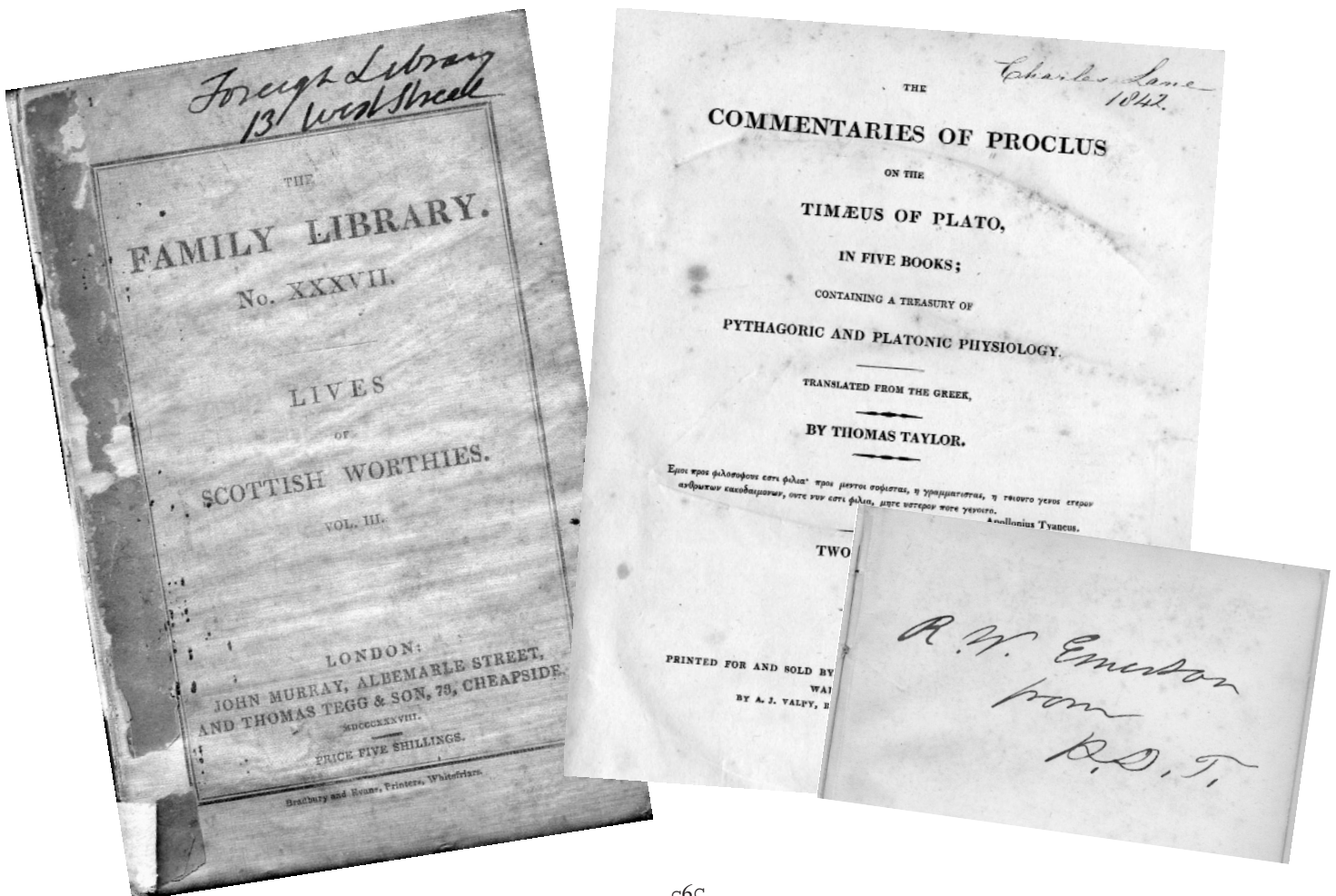
Concord, Massachusetts, has been home to some of America's most serious readers, among them the nineteenth-century philosopher, essayist, lecturer, and poet Ralph Waldo Emerson. Emerson maintained an extensive personal library in his home on the Cambridge Turnpike. He took advantage of the collections of the Concord Social Library and its successors. As a good citizen of Concord, he served on the Standing Committee of the Social Library and on the Library Committee of the Concord Town Library and the Concord Free Public Library. He delivered the keynote address at the dedication of the Free Public Library on October 1, 1873. Moreover, he recorded his thoughts about reading, books, and libraries in his voluminous journals and notebooks.

Emerson was keenly aware of the power of reading to transform individual and community. In 1873, as the dedication of the Concord Free Public Library approached, he wrote in his journal,

"Be a little careful about your Library. Do you foresee what you will do with it? Very little to be sure. But the real question is, What it will do with you? You will come here & get books that will open your eyes, & your ears, & your curiosity, & turn you inside out or outside in."

Established to document Concord history, life, landscape, literature, and people from the town's incorporation in 1635 to the present time, the Concord Free Public Library special collections include significant manuscript and printed resources illuminating the local history of books and reading. On June 11, 2002, participants in the AAS Summer Seminar "Books in American Lives, 1830-1890" visited the library to see some of these materials first-hand. In highlighting selections from what I showed the group that day, I hope to suggest the range and depth of the library's resources for reading studies and to encourage scholars

Left: A volume from the collection of Elizabeth Palmer Peabody's Foreign Library with that information and the address, 13 West Street, written by hand on the cover. Center: A volume presented by Emerson to the Concord Free Public Library in 1873. Right: Items from Ralph Waldo Emerson's library include the presentation copy of *Walden* (detail) inscribed to "R.W. Emerson from H. D.T."



unfamiliar with Concord's unique and growing collections to come and explore for themselves.

Volumes from the personal libraries of individuals—both the well-known and the more obscure—form an important category of documentation, and one in which the special collections are particularly rich. The library holds, for example, a copy of *Opera Quaedam Beati Basilii Caesariensis Episcopi* (Venice, 1535), inscribed and annotated by Edward Bulkeley, son of Concord founder and first minister Peter Bulkeley. Later owned and inscribed by Bulkeley descendant William Emerson (Revolutionary minister and grandfather of Ralph Waldo Emerson), this folio was eventually handed down to nineteenth-century minister George F. Simmons, son-in-law of Samuel Ripley (Emerson's father's half-brother). Ripley's father Ezra became minister of the church in Concord after William Emerson's death, married his predecessor's widow and became master of his home, now known as the Old Manse.

The special collections include some twenty-five volumes from Ralph Waldo Emerson's library, presented by Emerson himself or by members of his family. Among these books are inscribed presentation copies of Longfellow's *Kavanagh* (1849) and Thoreau's *Walden* (1854) and several Neo-Platonic works that originated in the James Pierrepont Greaves library brought from England in 1842 by Bronson Alcott and Charles Lane.

The Concord Free Public Library also has the largest undispersed group of books from Henry Thoreau's personal collection. Most of these approximately fifty volumes were presented in the 1870s, a decade after Thoreau's death, by his sister Sophia. They feature textbooks from his Harvard years, his copy of Giraud's *The Birds of Long Island* (1844; with manuscript annotations by Thoreau), and Thomas McKenney's *Memoirs, Official and Personal; with Sketches of Travels Among the Northern and Southern Indians* (1846; presented to Thoreau by his friend, poet William Ellery Channing).

Thoreau was fascinated by an account book kept by Concord storekeeper Ephraim Jones in 1742 and 1743. He found the manuscript at the estate auction of the effects of Deacon Reuben Brown in January of 1854, examined it at length, and described it in detail—with more than a little antiquarian enthusiasm—in his journal entry for January 27, 1854. Serendipitously, this “waste book” survives in Concord's special collections (the source of its acquisition unknown). Examined in conjunction with Thoreau's journal, the volume provides evidence of his powers of observation and permits informed exploration of why such a pedestrian item so interested him.

Concord's nineteenth-century readers were not all men and women of letters. For example, the library holds volumes that once belonged to physician, statistician, and social historian Edward Jarvis, who grew up and lived as a young man in Concord. His heavily annotated and extra-illustrated copy of Lemuel Shattuck's *A History of the Town of Concord* (1835) is particularly interesting. Vexed that he himself knew more about some aspects of local history than did Shattuck, Jarvis made sure that his superior knowledge was not forgotten. He corrected

Shattuck's errors, expanded upon the information in the printed history, and ultimately placed his edited copy of it in the Concord Free Public Library.

Diaries, letters, and memoirs frequently offer direct insight into readers' reactions to particular books. The manuscript diary (1834-36) of Martha Lawrence Prescott, a Concord Academy schoolgirl poised on the threshold of womanhood, provides a wonderful example. Prescott responded freely in her diary to authors she read for school and on her own—Locke, Combe, Whately, and Scott. (Prescott's diary has recently been transcribed and edited for publication in the 2003 issue of the *Concord Saunterer*, the journal of the Thoreau Society.)

Library records tell much about the reading habits of a community. The special collections include extensive library documentation from the eighteenth century on—of the Library Company in Concord (formed in 1784), Charitable Library Society (1795), Social Library (1821), Town Library (1851), Concord Free Public Library (1873), and others as well. These records illuminate the contents of collections, membership (in the case of private libraries), circulation, censorship, and other topics relevant to reading studies.

Although the Foreign Library and bookstore of transcendental reformer Elizabeth Palmer Peabody was located in Boston, Concordians Ralph Waldo Emerson, his wife Lidian, and Elizabeth Hoar (intimate of the Emerson family) were among those who frequented it in the 1840s. In the late 1870s, Peabody donated close to a thousand volumes (books, pamphlets, and periodicals) to the Concord Free Public Library. Much of what now survives from this gift consists of remnants of the Foreign Library. Studied in conjunction with the several printed catalogues that Peabody issued, the collection provides a window into the reading interests of Emerson's circle.

The Concord Free Public Library is an exceptional small-town library. It is committed to supporting meaningful scholarship by maintaining, enlarging, and making accessible its important collections. Its rich special collections dovetail with the holdings of larger, more visible research institutions such as AAS.

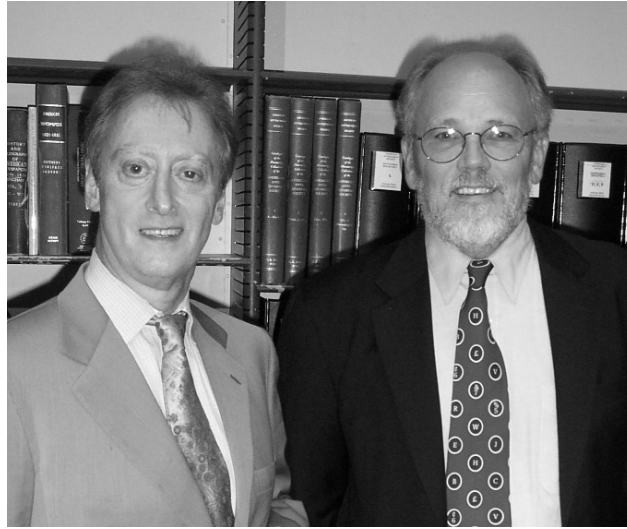
I urge anyone interested in Concord's collections to contact me by phone at (978) 318-3342 or by e-mail at LWilson@min-lib.net. The special collections are normally located in the main library building at 129 Main Street, in Concord Center. However, we have recently moved temporarily to the Fowler Branch in West Concord to accommodate renovation and expansion of the main building. For information regarding hours, selected finding aids, our manuscript Thoreau survey collection (digitized through a grant from AT&T), and online exhibitions, visit the special collections page of the Concord Free Public Library website at <http://www.concordnet.org/library>, then click to special collections. The database of the Minuteman Library Network (accessible from the CFPL homepage) includes bibliographic descriptions of a significant portion of our holdings.

Leslie Perrin Wilson
Curator of Special Collections, CFPL

Audubon's *Birds of America* featured in 2003 Wiggins Lecture

Gregory H. Nobles, Professor of History, School of History, Technology, and Society, Georgia Institute of Technology, presented the 2003 James Russell Wiggins Lecture at Antiquarian Hall on Thursday, November 6, 2003. His topic, "Ornithology and Enterprise: Making and Marketing John James Audubon's *Birds of America*," brought together his interest and current research on birds with the methodology and approach of the history of the book.

John James Audubon's double elephant folio edition of *The Birds of America* (4 vols., 1827-38) still stands as one of the most remarkable artistic and scientific achievements in the history of the book. It is a massive work of natural history that offers the reader an innovative interplay between image and text. For Audubon, though, producing this "Great Work" proved to be



2003 Wiggins Lecturer Gregory H. Nobles (right) with Robert A. Gross, who gave the 1989 lecture.

as much about entrepreneurship as ornithology, and *The Birds of America* became the family business for over three decades. Looking at the popular perception of Audubon's birds from his time to our own, Nobles explored the connection between the cultural and commercial significance of this big book about birds, which represents both an investigation of nature and an investment in art. Ultimately, he concludes, the various ways people have valued Audubon's work leads us to confront the question of whether *The Birds of America* is—or should be—a book at all by discussing the ways in which volumes have been taken apart to sell

the prints for their decorative potential.

The lecture, like others in this series that began in 1983, will be published in the *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*.

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