
The APHA Newsletter

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Almanacs & Early American Culture

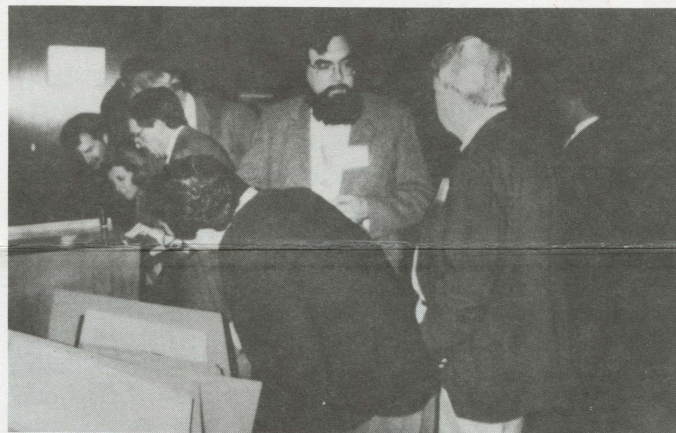
APHA and the American Antiquarian Society will join with the American Historical Association to co-sponsor a session at the AHA 1992 Annual Meeting. The session is entitled "Almanacs and the Unification of Early American Culture." The following papers are scheduled to be presented at the session: Claudia L. Bushman, Columbia University, "The Almanac: What's in it for the Farmers"; Peter Eisenstadt, Encyclopedia of New York City, "Astrology, Colonial Almanacs, and the Understanding of the Weather"; William Pencak, Pennsylvania State University, "Politics and Ideology in Early American Almanacs." Richard D. Brown from the University of Connecticut will make the comment.

APHA member John Hench, American Antiquarian Society, will be the chair of the session. In his words: "No other works written by and for early Americans enjoyed the popularity of almanacs. Published at first in Boston, Philadelphia, and New York, by 1800 they flourished in all the new republic's states. Almanacs offered a cornucopia of information on the weather, farming techniques, political events, cures for ailments animal and human, and stories and proverbs designed both to amuse and instruct. Mostly secular in content and assembled by those who printed them in most instances, almanacs played an important role in the diffusion of knowledge and ideas. They can be profitably studied in relation to the history of reading and literacy and what written matter meant to people, and also in the context of the development of a "public sphere" where authority came from the writer rather than sanctioned publications of the church and state. Read in city and on farm, by rich and poor, almanacs offer as close a glimpse at the collective mentality of early America as we are likely to obtain. The three papers in this session will explore different aspects of the almanacs' content in an effort to understand this mentality and the role these printed tracts played in reflecting and shaping it."

The AHA Annual Meeting will take place in Washington, D.C., December 27-30. All AHA sessions will be held in the Sheraton Washington Hotel (2660 Woodley Road NW) and the Omni Shoreham Hotel (2500 Calvert Street NW). The APHA sponsored session will take place on Monday, December 28 from 2:30-4:30 in the Marshall Room of the Sheraton Washington Hotel. For more information about the conference, including registration and hotel accommodations, please contact: American Historical Association, 400 A Street SE, Washington D.C. 20003. Phone: (202) 544-2422.

VIRGINIA BARTOW

APHA Annual Conference



Princeton professor Anthony Grafton, one of the Conference speakers, next to display of rare books; look for a report of the proceedings in the November/December issue of the Newsletter.

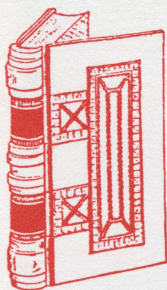
AAS Announces 1993-94 Research Fellowship Program

The American Antiquarian Society Visiting Research Fellowships provide funds for scholars interested in studying American history and culture at the Society's research library. The AAS library contains materials printed within the boundaries of the U.S., Canada, and other former British possessions. The collections are unparalleled in their coverage of imprints through 1820 and are very strong through 1876. In subject, the materials cover all aspects of American life.

The fellowships support both short-term (from one to three months) and long-term (from six to twelve months) projects. There will be two long-term fellowships awarded and between 13 to 16 short-term awards. Two of the fellowships are limited in scope: one covers American 18th-century studies and the other the history of the book in American culture.

The deadline for applications, including letters of recommendation, is January 15, 1993. Award announcements will be made in mid-March. For complete information about the AAS fellowship program, including detailed descriptions of the fellowships and of the Society's collections, please write to John B. Hench, Director of Research and Publication, Room A, American Antiquarian Society, 185 Salisbury Street, Worcester, Massachusetts 01609. Phone (508) 752-5813 or 755-5221.

Book Column



It might seem strange to pick a book for review that was published in 1971, and so is now old enough to vote. One might also say "High time!" However, the one I have in mind, even though now out of print, might benefit from what I would call a "reminder review." It is indeed a classic of subject bibliography, and one that is central to our own concerns: G. Thomas Tanselle's

Guide to the Study of United States Imprints (2 vols. Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971). It is, I think, the beginning point for the study of all aspects of printing history in this country. Of course, the title suggests something a bit broader, and indeed the work is just as concerned with publishing as an entrepreneurial activity. What do I find particularly laudatory about the work? First is its completeness. In over 15 years of collecting in the area of publishing history, I can count on the fingers of, well, one or two fingers, the items to which the tag "not in Tanselle" can be applied. Second, it has an introduction which carefully explains what the work is about. This is a feature often honored in the breach by reference works. Third is its careful organization. There are three sections: basic imprint lists, including geographic, genre, and author; related lists, including copyright, catalogues and book-trade directories; and supplementary studies, including individual printers and publishers, general studies, and checklists of secondary material. All of this is thoroughly indexed. It even has a list—one that I can find little to quarrel with—of core titles in the field. Virtually its only fault at present is the need to be updated. Perhaps a project for someone in APHA, if Prof. Tanselle has no wish for the task? Although out of print, a copy appears now and again in the catalogs of the dealers I have been highlighting in this column. The most recent listing I saw had the work at \$130, quite an increase from the original list of \$30. One supposes most copies went into institutional libraries, where they will remain, so I expect the price on the antiquarian market will continue to rise.

PHILIP A. METZGER

Notes and Queries

Pennsylvania State University at University Park, Pa., has established a Center for the History of the Book under the direction of James L.W. West III. This Center is affiliated with the Center for the Book at the Library of Congress and with the Pennsylvania Center for the Book in Harrisburg. The Center at Penn State will have its home in the

Department of English but will be interdisciplinary in its activities. It will offer undergraduate courses and graduate seminars, host conferences and summer institutes, and organize lectures and exhibits. In cooperation with the Center, the Penn State Press has launched the Penn State Series in the History of the Book, a line of scholarly monographs in such areas as publishing history, author-publisher relationships, and the compositional history of particular literary works. Formal inauguration of the Center will take place in the autumn of 1993. For further information, contact Professor West at the Department of English, Burrowes Building, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA 16802.



The Bibliographical Society of America recently announced its 1992 Research Fellows. Congratulations to APHA member James Green. The program supports short-term Fellowships for scholars undertaking research associated with the study of the history of books and printing. Inquiries about the Fellowship Program should be addressed to the Executive Secretary, BSA, P.O. Box 397, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163.



The Library Company of Philadelphia will begin a construction/renovation project in September 1992 that is scheduled to last through May 1993. On occasion the Library Company will be closed. For your convenience and safety they request that researchers call for an appointment before coming to the Library. No exhibitions will be on view during this time. The project will provide the Library Company with many critically needed things—a new facade, a central entrance, a new exhibition gallery, expanded room for the Prints and Photographs Department, and a main Reading Room that is quiet and secure. The Library Company is confident that the improvements in their ability to serve the public will compensate for any temporary inconvenience during the construction. The Library Company is located at 1314 Locust Street, Philadelphia; phone: 215/546-3181.



Wanted: PRINTER. The Farmers' Museum. Responsibilities: Interpreting rural printing history to 95,000+ visitors a year; operating historic flatbed and liberty presses, setting type, producing small runs of FM imprints for resale; hiring/training/scheduling print shop interpretive staff; conducting school workshops. Salaried, 100% paid fringe benefits. Send resume and statement of interest to Operations Manager, The Farmers' Museum, PO Box 800, Cooperstown, NY 13326.

Types and Presses

Brian Starling of Golden, Colorado, recently purchased a home that once belonged to the editor of a local newspaper. There are several printing presses in his garage which he describes as in working order and of museum quality. Mr. Starling would like to give the presses away, preferably to a single entity. He has: a Babcock 1920 cylinder press and folder, two Mergenthaler linotype machines (ca. 1920), a 1950 Fairchild scanna graver, a Chandler Price platen press (ca. 1912), and an 1871 Sanborn & Sons paper cut off. Please contact: Brian Starling, 900 12th St., Golden CO 80401. Business phone: (303) 643-2232 (Denver), or (800) 525-7042; Home phone: (303) 277-1152.

New Members

Dwight Agner, Athens, GA
 Al Buck, Iowa City, IA
 G. S. Cabrera, Miami, FL
 Scott Denlinger, Philadelphia, PA
 John N. Dymont, Ontario, Canada
 Carol P. Grossman, Tucson, AZ
 T. Michael Kaylor, Chestertown, MD
 Allan Kornblum, Minneapolis, MN
 Jack R. Salling, Alpharetta, GA
 Peter Stinely, Williamsburg, VA
 David Sutphin, Englewood, CO
 Dorothy Terry, New York, NY
 John A. Williams, Monroe, CT

Library Treasures

From the Collections of the Library Company of Philadelphia

A Specimen of Metal Ornaments cast at the Letter Foundry of Binny & Ronaldson. Philadelphia: Fry and Kammeter, 1809

The first commercially successful American type foundry was established by Binny and Ronaldson in 1796 in Philadelphia. Although papermaking, engraving, and binding had put down hardy roots in American soil, except for a few sporadic efforts at self-sufficiency, all type used earlier in this country had been imported from England, Scotland, or Germany. European typefounders jealously guarded the molds from which type was cast. Two recent emigrants from Scotland changed that. James Ronaldson, a former biscuit-maker, provided the capital. Archibald Binny, a competent Edinburgh typefounder who left Scotland for political reasons, supplied the molds, tools, and know-how that he brought with him.

The well-designed types and ornaments, midway in design between old and modern style, found a ready market, not only locally, but also in Boston and New York. It was through the influence of Binny and Ronaldson that the old fashioned long "s" disappeared from American books. One of their type faces is still in use today under the trade name "Monticello."

When commerce with Great Britain was totally interrupted by the embargo of 1808, the typefounders took the opportunity to advertise their wares more widely. The first American type specimen book—only a few single sheets had been issued earlier—was of ornaments, then being increasingly used to decorate books and advertisements. The twenty-three page pamphlet must have been sent to printers throughout the United States, but few copies have survived. It was followed in 1812 by a specimen book of printing types, and when Binny retired in 1819, Ronaldson put out one in his own name. All these had belonged to the printer-publisher Mathew Carey; they were given to the Library Company in the 1850s by his grandson, Isaac Lea.

JAMES GREEN





Mary Reinsch (center), Head of Conservation in the Book Arts Conservation laboratory at the Getty Center Resource Collections, shown with special bindings/boxes for preservation in the collection of historical printing and graphics.

Getty Conference Notes

"Reading and the Arts of the Book" a conference organized by the Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities was held in Santa Monica, California, June 25 to July 3, 1992. Chaired by J.M. Edelstein, Senior Bibliographer and Resource Coordinator, and initiated in collaboration with other programs of the J. Paul Getty Trust, the rich schedule of events sought to explore the effect which book arts have had and are having on artistic and literary production, on education, communication and on the act of reading itself. Programs ranged from the illuminated manuscript to the contemporary book arts to the psychology of reading to electronic imaging.

Lively lectures and panel discussions took place at the Center, at the Getty Museum and at the Getty Conservation Institute. Visits were made to the Huntington Library, the Rothchild collection, Getty Conservation laboratories, the studio of Buzz Spector and Susan King's Paradise Press. Featured presentations included: "From Script to Print" with Lee Hendrix and Anne Anninger; "Revolutions", Robert Darnton; a panel on "Book Making and Reading from the Renaissance to the late 19th Century"; "Word-Image-Reading I and II", Ellen Handler Spitz, Breon Mitchell and a panel; "Books and Things", Buzz Spector, Neil Harris; a panel on "Anti-Matter" highlighting The Sackner Archive; "The Economics of Reading", David Godine and May Castleberry; "The Book: Consciousness at Work", Dick Higgins; "Beyond the Object", Margot Lovejoy and Florian Brody; "The Book as a Container of Consciousness", closing paper by William Gass. There were additional caucus sessions for the invited participants and it is anticipated that proceedings will be published in the near future. Inquiries may be addressed to Dr. Edelstein at the Center, 401 Wilshire Boulevard, Santa Monica, CA 90401-1455.

ED COLKER

Exhibits

NEW HAVEN

"Gold on Cloth: 19th-century Bookbinding in England," through November 29. Yale Center for British Art. Organized by Sue Allen.

NEW YORK CITY

"3rd Annual Festival of Paper." December 5. Open House at Dieu Donné, 3 Crosby Street, 5th Floor. 212/226-0573.

"Mother Goose in New York: McLoughlin Books and the Art of Woodcut Illustration." November 3-January 12. New-York Historical Society. A lecture series on "The Woodblock in Book Illustration: An Historical Perspective" will be held concurrently.

"New Worlds, Ancient Texts: The Cultural Impact of an Encounter." September 19-January 9, Gottesman Hall. Also, "Mapping the New World." September 19-January 9, Edna Barnes Salomon Room, New York Public Library, Fifth Avenue and 42nd Street.

"Voices of Scotland: Scottish Literature, 15th-20th Centuries." December 15-February 20, Grolier Club, 47 East 60th Street. 212/838-6690.

"A Christmas Carol." November 24-January 10.

"Printers and Miniaturists: Illuminated books from Venice." December 3-April 4.

"The Bernard H. Breslauer Collection of Manuscript Illuminations." December 9-April 4.

All of the above at the Pierpont Morgan Library, 29 East 36th Street.

Lectures

NEW YORK CITY

November 11, "Paper Visions from China."

December 9, "Living Traditions: Paper in Mexican Ceremonial Life."

Both lectures, sponsored by Dieu Donné Papermill, will be held at 6:30 at Artists Space, 223 West Broadway. \$5.00 donation requested.

The Editorial Committee of *The APHA Newsletter* welcomes your news, announcements, comments and corrections. *The Newsletter* is published six times yearly by the American Printing History Association. Subscriptions are through membership in APHA. Individual memberships for the calendar year are \$30; \$35 for Institutions; \$60 for Contributing memberships; \$15 for Student memberships. Included in that membership is a subscription to *Printing History*, APHA's semi-annual scholarly journal. Advertising in the journal is available at \$250 for a full page. APHA's mailing list can be rented for one-time use at \$100. Address all correspondence to APHA, P.O. Box 4922, Grand Central Station, New York NY 10163-4922. Copyright © 1992 by the American Printing History Association. All rights reserved.