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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF THE THOMAS FISHER RARE BOOK LIBRARY

ISSUE No. 16, November 1995

ISSN 0840-5565



## Anne of Green Gables Comes to the Fisher Library

The Fisher Library has been very fortunate in being able to acquire, with generous assistance from the Friends, a copy of the first edition of one of the most famous Canadian books of all time — L.M. Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables*. First issued in April 1908 by the L.C. Page Company of Boston, the book proved extraordinarily popular right from the start. There was a second impression in July and by the end of the year there had been five further impressions and over 20,000 copies sold. Reviews were enthusiastic. The author received fan mail from hundreds of delighted readers, young and old, including Bliss Carman and Mark Twain.

Montgomery was amazed. "It seems that *Anne* is a big success", she wrote in her journal in October of 1908.

*It is a 'best seller' and is in its fifth edition — I cannot realize this. My strongest feeling seems to be incredulity. I can't believe that such a simple little tale, written in and of a simple P.E.I. farming settlement, with a juvenile audience in view, can really have scored out in the busy world.* (Selected Journals, 1, p. 339)

Nothing in Montgomery's previous experience had prepared her for such success. She had been writing short stories and poems determinedly for much of her life, having them published in newspapers, ladies' magazines, and Sunday school journals. She dreamed of writing a "real live book", but could not see how to get started and how to find time

to finish it. "Somehow it seemed such a big task I hadn't the courage to begin it." (Selected Journals, 1, p. 330) In the spring of 1905, however, as she looked over an old notebook in search of ideas for a serial suitable for a Sunday school paper, Montgomery found an entry written ten

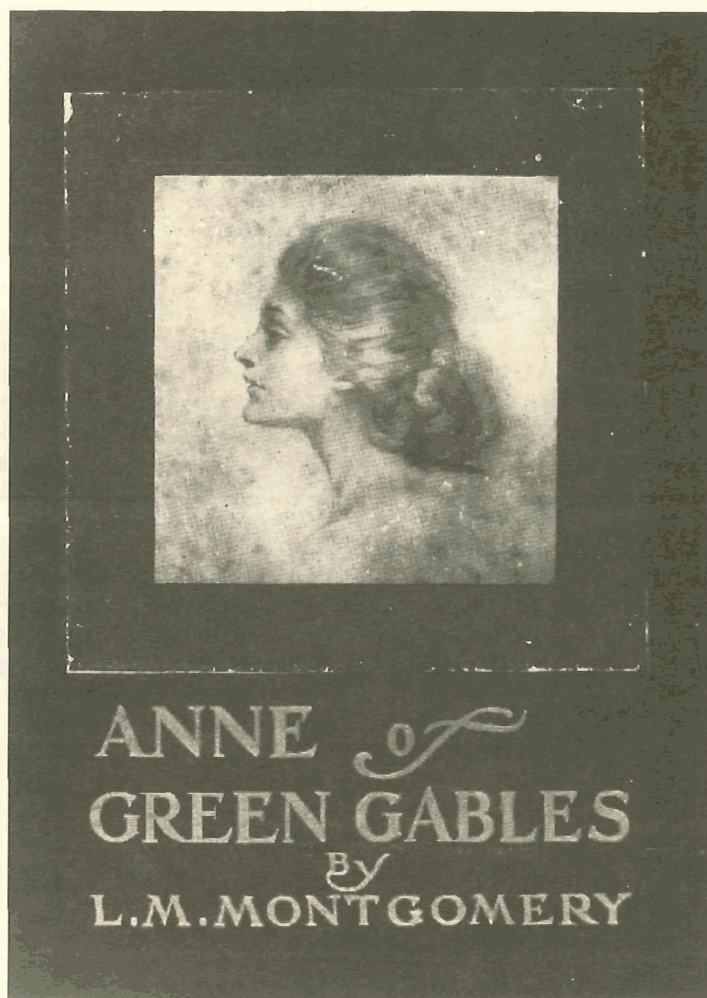
years earlier: "Elderly couple apply to orphan asylum for a boy. By mistake a girl is sent them." She thought this would do nicely for her purpose.

*I began to block out chapters, devise incidents and 'brood up' my heroine. Somehow or other she seemed very real to me and took possession of me to an unusual extent. Her personality appealed to me and I thought it rather a shame to waste her on an ephemeral little serial ... The result of this was Anne of Green Gables.* (Selected Journals, 1, p. 330)

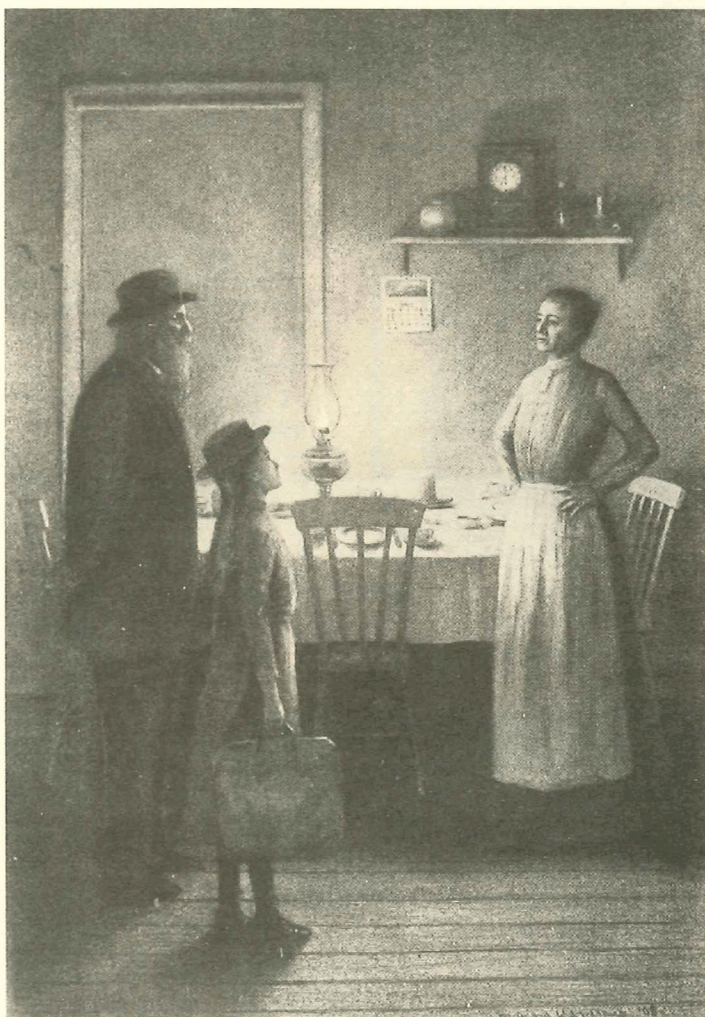
She wrote quickly and easily.

"It was a labor of love. Nothing I have ever written gave me so much pleasure to write." (*ibid.*) The pleasure and ease are evident in the surviving manuscript, now in the Confederation Centre of the Arts at Charlottetown. Montgomery scholar, Elizabeth Epperly, who has examined all the extant Montgomery manuscripts, has described the one for *Anne of Green Gables* as "by far the tidiest, most clearly written, and most obviously inspired of all the manuscripts", showing "evidence of joy and speed in the composition as a whole." (Epperly, "Approaching the Montgomery manuscripts", p. 75, in *Harvesting Thistles*, Guelph, 1994)

Montgomery finished her manuscript in January 1906 and typed it out on her old typewriter "that never makes the capitals plain and won't print 'w' at all" (Selected Journals, 1, p. 331). She sent the typescript to four American publishers in turn, each of whom returned it to her very promptly. She wept at the first rejection and after receiving the fourth one (from Henry Holt of New York) she put the manuscript away in an old hat box in a clothes closet,



Front cover of the first edition of *Anne of Green Gables* (Boston: L.C. Page) issued in April 1908.



*'Matthew Cuthbert, who's that?' she ejaculated. Illustration by M.A. & W.A.J. Claus, showing Anne's arrival at Green Gables. From the 1908 edition of Anne of Green Gables.*

intending at some future time to cut it down to make the Sunday school serial she had originally intended. Rummaging through the closet a year later, she came across the hat box and leafed through the manuscript again. "Somehow I found it rather interesting." (*ibid.*) She decided to send it out one more time. Off it went to L.C. Page in Boston and back came a letter telling her the company would be glad to add the book to the next season's list and suggesting that "it might be a good idea to write a second story dealing with the same character".

The journal entry for June 20, 1908, records Montgomery's excitement at first seeing her book in print:

*To-day has been, as Anne herself would say "an epoch in my life". My book came to-day, fresh from the*

*publishers. I candidly confess that it was for me a proud, wonderful, thrilling moment! There in my hand lay the material realization of all the dreams and hopes and ambitions and struggles of my whole conscious existence — my first book! ... As far as appearance goes the book is all I could desire — lovely cover design, well bound, well printed. Anne will not fail for lack of suitable garbing at all events. (Selected Journals, I, p. 335)*

As Montgomery noted, the book was attractively presented. The copy acquired by the Fisher Library is bound in brown cloth and lettered in gilt. Decorating the front cover is a small vignette, printed on cream paper with a green border, which shows a charming, although surprisingly

mature, young woman with auburn hair. There appear to have been at least two other variants of this binding, one in cream or light beige cloth and one in green.

The text was illustrated with seven half-tone plates designed by a husband and wife team: William A.J. Claus, a Boston portrait painter and director of the Claus Art School, and his wife, May Austin Claus. Most of their rather stilted illustrations, like the cover vignette, show Anne as a conventional-looking young woman of the period — not as the spirited child portrayed by subsequent illustrators. Montgomery's reaction to the illustrations was mixed. In a letter to her friend Ephraim Weber, written in the fall of 1908, she comments,

*In regard to the illustrations. I thought the second one the best in the book — the one where she [Anne] arrives at Green Gables. In it she looks almost exactly as I imagined her looking. However, I suppose the illustrations, lacking as they are in many respects, are about as good as most of those in present day fiction. The one I resented most is the bridge scene. Although in the chapter Anne is distinctly described as having "short rings of hair" she is depicted with streaming tresses! (Green Gables Letters, p. 73)*

Montgomery had an additional reason for finding that second illustration appropriate. She admitted that the depiction of Matthew had a "very strong resemblance to David Macneil", the Cavendish neighbour whose house had been her inspiration for 'Green Gables'. Although Montgomery always denied that either David Macneil or his sister Margaret, with whom he lived, had been her models for the characters of Matthew and Marilla, she was intrigued by the "odd coincidence". (*Selected Journals*, 2, p. 38)

Despite their shortcomings, the Claus illustrations were retained through all the ensuing Page reprintings of this edition, and even appear in the recent New Canadian Library edition published in 1992. Subsequent Montgomery titles published by Page, however, were illustrated in colour by better-known American artists, including George Gibbs, H. Weston Taylor, and M.L. Kirk.

The first Canadian edition of *Anne*, published by Ryerson Press in 1942, had no illustration apart from a small black and white vignette of 'Green Gables' on the title page. Both the title page and cloth binding, which utilized the same vignette

on its front cover and bore a stylized trillium on the spine, were designed by the Canadian artist, Thoreau MacDonald. The Green Gables vignette and the trillium were used on subsequent Ryerson editions of the Anne books. Later Ryerson editions were illustrated by another Canadian artist, Hilton Hassell.

As we all know today — from our TV guides, if not from personal experience — Anne's popularity has never waned. By the end of her second year in print Page had issued sixteen impressions. The book was constantly reissued without change over the next three decades, reaching the 68th impression by 1942, the year of the author's death. By then Anne had also been translated into Swedish, Dutch, Polish, Norwegian, Danish, Finnish, French, and Icelandic. Translations into Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Slovak, Spanish, and Turkish were to follow in the next forty years.

Sadly, Montgomery did not profit as she should have from her best-seller. Her initial contract with Page took advantage of her inexperience and denied her a meaningful share of the royalties, as well as giving Page exclusive publication rights to all her books written during the next five years. Montgomery was later to win a lawsuit against the firm, but she never received her fair share of her book's phenomenal profits, nor did she receive any of the proceeds resulting from the two Hollywood films based on the book.

Over the years, as Anne's popularity continued to increase, her first appearance in print became a genuinely rare book, both scarce and sought after. Amazingly few copies of the first issue of *Anne of Green Gables* survive. It seems probable that Page issued a small first impression, perhaps underestimating, as did its author, the book's immense appeal. The National Library in Ottawa, the Osborne Collection in the Toronto Public Library, the McLaughlin Library at the University of Guelph (where Montgomery's journals are now held), the Charlottetown Public Library in the Confederation Centre of the Arts at Charlottetown, and now the Fisher Library, are among the few Canadian institutional libraries to hold copies.

The Fisher Library is most grateful to its Friends, and to Cicely Blackstock and Wentworth Walker in particular, whose generosity made it possible to add this important volume to the Library's Canadian Literature Collection.

Katharine Martyn, Assistant Director  
Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library



## David Jones A Centennial Exhibition Fisher Library

2 October 1995 – 2 January 1996

David Jones (1895–1974) belongs to a great tradition, that of the notable artist who is also a notable writer. It is distinctively, even predominantly, an English tradition. One thinks immediately of William Blake, then of Dante Gabriel Rossetti and William Morris, of Edward Lear and Aubrey Beardsley and Max Beerbohm, of Wyndham Lewis. David Jones takes his place with the first of these.

Kenneth Clark once wrote of Jones as "the best watercolourist since Blake," and so, though this is not a gallery exhibition, it is only right that there should be on display an example of a watercolour, "Mehefin" (June), from one of his best years, 1930. He is also a major wood-engraver and an adventurous copper-engraver. For perhaps the first time anywhere it will be possible for viewers to see, framed and in sequence, all the engravings from three of his major commissions — *The Book of Jonah* (1926), *The Chester Play of the Deluge* (1927), and *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (1929), all reprinted under the Clover Hill imprint, from the original blocks or plates.

The son of a printer and a friend and associate of Eric Gill, who is as lastingly famous for his type designs and his lettering in stone as for his sculpture and

wood-engravings, David Jones was never himself concerned with printing or with carved inscription. Taking a sheet of heavy paper, he would cover it with Chinese white (so that corrections could readily be made), and then, with the utmost care, combined with the utmost freedom of invention, draw and colour the words of an inscription, in Latin or Welsh or Old or Middle English, or, very often, in a combination of these, a conversation of languages and cultures. It is an art at once highly literary and highly abstract.

David Jones was known and acclaimed as an artist in the late 1920s, before it ever occurred to him to write. Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front*, translated by his friend A. H. Wheen, was a runaway, world-wide best-seller. "I can do better than that," Jones said, and did. Private Jones of the London Battalion of the Royal Welch Fusiliers, of all the writers of the Great War probably saw the longest period of service, and spend the longest time in the front line and under fire. He knew intimately the soldier's world of position and movement, of danger and boredom, of heightened life and wasted life; he saw the scene with a painter's eye, but he also heard the soldiers' lingo and songs and jokes with a writer's ear; and all is transmuted into what T.S. Eliot calls "a



"Hound of S. Dominic", 1922 wood engraving by David Jones.

work of genius." *In Parenthesis* (1937), which has epic qualities, has been judged by many to be the supreme literary masterpiece of that most literary of wars.

*The Anathemata* (1952), modestly subtitled "Fragments of an Attempted Writing," Jones regarded as his principal achievement as a writer. It is to him what the *Cantos* are to Pound and *Four Quartets* to Eliot — an answer to the old problem of the "long poem", the "poem containing history". W.H. Auden

and its story, agreeing with St. Augustine that "empire is robbery". But he was deeply impressed, on a visit as a convalescent to Jerusalem in 1934, by the continuity between the Roman Empire and its common soldiers at the time of the Passion and the British Mandate and its tommies in his time: he fused them imaginatively in "The Wall" and "The Fatigue".

The most important outward events in what was a quiet life were the long service on the Western Front and the few weeks in Jerusalem. The crucial inner decision took place in 1921 when he was received into the Roman Catholic Church by Father John O'Connor. Father O'Connor was to

David Jones has long had his Canadian admirers: Norman Endicott and Barker Fairley knew him as an artist and writer from the beginning of his career. *The University of Toronto Quarterly* has over the years printed many articles and reviews, and the Press has brought out René Hague's *Commentary on the Anathemata* and Thomas Dilworth's *The Shape of Meaning in the Poetry of David Jones* (1988), which won a British Council Prize. Hugh Anson-Cartwright in 1984 published *Inner Necessities*, the letters of David Jones to Desmond Chute, edited by Thomas Dilworth; and Douglas Lochhead has privately printed a *Word Index of In Parenthesis*. Two previous exhibitions of



Left: "Gulliver cuts down trees", 1925. Centre: "Dominican friar", 1924. Right: "S. Dominic blessing friar", 1924. Wood engravings by David Jones.

characterized it as "very probably the finest long poem written in English in this century." It is a sustained meditation on the course of history, especially the history of Britain, from its palaeological and anthropological beginnings to his own time. The shadow of the Cross falls, the light of the Cross shines, throughout.

A collection of shorter, self-contained "fragments", *The Sleeping Lord* (1974), shows his lifelong pondering of the "Welsh thing" and the question of empire, Roman and British. A Londoner by birth and upbringing, and for most of his life by residence, he nevertheless would say, pounding his chest, that he had from boyhood "the Welsh thing in here." Some of the pieces in *The Sleeping Lord* must surely be the most Welsh writings ever not written in the Welsh language. As for empire, he was never an imperialist, for all his intense loyalty to the island of Britain

receive G.K. Chesterton in the following year and is the model for Father Brown, but Jones was drawn to him as the translator of Jacques Maritain's *Art et scolastique*, a book that was to influence his thought profoundly, along with Maurice de la Taille's *Mystery of Faith* and Spengler's *Decline of the West* and Spengler's antidote, the historical writings of Christopher Dawson.

Two collections of essays, *Epoch and Artist* (1959) and the posthumous *Dying Gaul* (1978), contain many short essays and reviews, all of interest to those who find Jones himself interesting, and a number of signal contributions to the life of the mind in our time — the long "Introduction to *The Ancient Mariner*," the learned and penetrating "Myth of Arthur," and most especially "Art and Sacrament," which students of the theory of art should take a long look at.

some of the material in the present one, both arranged by Cynthia Heidenreich, have been held here, one in the old library building, the other in the display areas of the Robarts Library. The Fisher Library possesses most of the books and pictures now on display and is the repository of Jones's long and lively correspondence with René Hague, one of the prime sources for criticism and biography.

Centennial conferences on the work of David Jones have been held this year at the University of Warwick in Coventry and at the University of Wales in Lampeter. We are pleased to offer this exhibition of his work at the close of his first century and the beginning of his second.

William Blissett  
Professor Emeritus of English  
University College  
University of Toronto

*Hebrew and Yiddish Bibles  
Added to the Fisher Library's Collection*

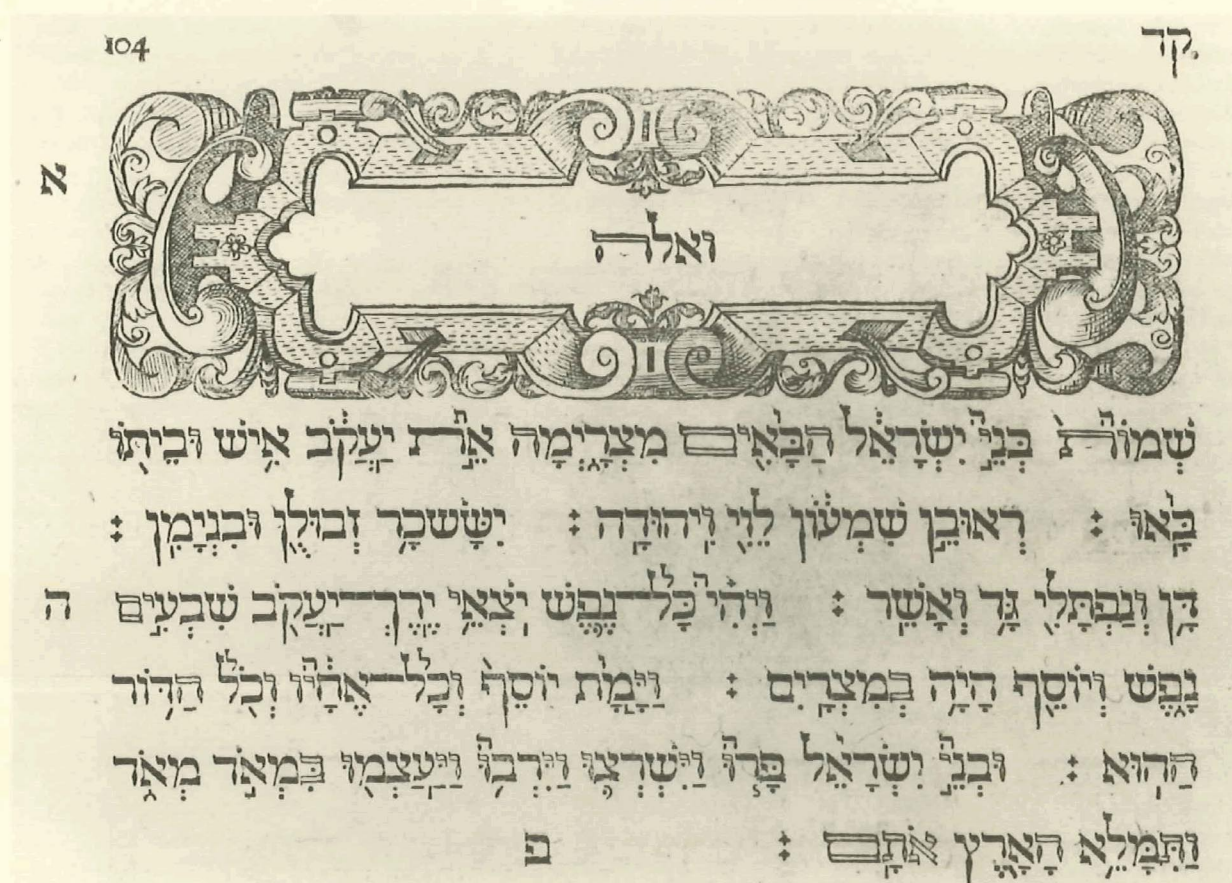
In the past year, the Fisher Library has acquired three old Bibles of note. One is in Hebrew, one in Yiddish, and the third in Hebrew with Yiddish translation and commentary.

**The Hutter Bible, Cologne, 1603**

This Hebrew Bible was edited and published by the German Orientalist Elias

editions and produced a carefully edited text. It is distinguished by the unique feature of having the root letters of each word in solid type and the inflectional prefixes and suffixes in hollow type. Root letters of weak verbs are added above the words. It was intended as an aid to students of the Bible and the Hebrew language. One can imagine that such a

Testament, which he published in 1600. His Hebrew Bible went through several editions, presumably all heavily subsidized. All were published in Hamburg except the last, which was published in Cologne in 1603. It is this edition which the Fisher Library was able to purchase last year, thanks to the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Patrick Hart Green.



*The opening page of the Book of Exodus from the Hutter Bible. Note the hollow letters and the letters above the lines which signify root letters not appearing in the words of the text.*

Hutter (1553–1609). Hutter began his career as a professor of Hebrew at Leipzig, but from 1577 until his death, his life was dedicated to the promotion of the study of the Hebrew language and the dissemination of the Bible in polyglot editions. His first publication was a Hebrew-German dictionary and this was followed nine years later by his edition of the Hebrew Bible which appeared in 1587. Hutter consulted manuscripts and early printed

text would have been very expensive to produce, due to the complicated task it presented to the typesetter. Unfortunately, the Bible was not a commercial success and the publishing costs were not covered by sales. Its high price probably put it out of reach of those most likely to use it. Hutter was not discouraged and continued to work on producing various editions of the Bible, including a twelve-language polyglot edition of the New

**Two Yiddish Bible Translations  
Printed in Amsterdam, 1687 and 1729**

The first of the Yiddish Bible translations acquired was prepared by Josef Wittenhausen. To understand the significance of this translation some historical background is called for. The translation of the Bible into Yiddish was undertaken as part of the ongoing effort to make this basic book of the Jewish religion accessible to the less schooled masses who had

difficulty with the Hebrew text. The Yiddish language was the vernacular of Ashkenazic Jewry and many Jews were more comfortable with it than with Hebrew. Yiddish translations of the Pentateuch and other important biblical books read in the synagogue were produced already in the early part of the sixteenth century. It was not till the latter half of the seventeenth century, however, that someone undertook to translate the entire Bible into Yiddish. The first to do so was Uri Fayvish Halevi, who lived in Amsterdam where he had contacts with Sephardic Jews and Christians who possessed good translations, and whom he found to be better versed in the Hebrew Scriptures than his Ashkenazic brethren. He assumed there would be a large market for a Yiddish version of the Bible and commissioned Jekuthiel ben Isaac Blitz to prepare the translation. Blitz, however, was not an accomplished Hebraist and relied on Luther's German translation and the official Dutch translation, the *Statenvertaling*, to such an extent that at times his version was closer to these texts than to the Hebrew original. He also had a tendency to insert attacks on Christianity in his translation. Furthermore, his text was peppered with Dutch and Low-German words which would have made it difficult for the Polish Jews, for whom it was primarily intended, to understand. All of these factors tended to compromise the quality of Blitz's translation.

The Sephardic publisher, Joseph Athias, who was one of Uri Fayvish's financiers, became disillusioned with Blitz's work and withdrew his support for the project while the translation was being printed. He ordered one of his typesetters, Josef Witzzenhausen, to produce another translation. Witzzenhausen was a better scholar than Blitz and the translation he produced was more in line with the traditional Yiddish translations and was considered a great improvement over earlier versions. Uri Fayvish completed the printing of Blitz's translation in 1678. In it he complains of a trusted colleague stealing his idea to publish a Yiddish translation of the entire Hebrew Bible. In the following year Witzzenhausen's version appeared. In his introduction he makes fun of the mistakes in Blitz's translation.

Despite his dissatisfaction with Blitz's translation, Athias still had money invested in it. Before he became disillusioned with Blitz's work, he had received a bundle of folios for safekeeping. Not wishing to forfeit a substantial investment, he took these pages (leaves 21–36) and incorporated them into Witzzenhausen's translation. So despite the errors and inconsistencies in Blitz's translation, financial considerations overrode the demands of scholarship. Early this year the Fisher Library purchased a copy of the second edition of Witzzenhausen's translation which was published in Amsterdam in 1687.

In 1725 Menahem Amelander and Eliezer Zussman Roedelsheim published the first fascicles of their handsome edition of the Hebrew Bible, entitled *Sefer Magishe minab* (Presenters of an offering). The Hebrew text was accompanied by the commentary of the great Northern French exegete, Rashi (1040–1105), and a Yiddish translation and commentary prepared by the editors. Each text is produced in a different type face. The biblical text is in a Sephardic square type, Rashi's commentary in the Sephardic cursive type which bears his name—Rashi script, and the Yiddish text in an Ashkenazic cursive called *vaybertaytsh*, *tkhine-ksav* or *tsenerene-ksav*, which was reserved for Yiddish texts. These names allude to the fact that many if not most Yiddish religious publications in the early modern period were intended for women. (*Tkhines* are prayers written by or for women; *Tsenerene* is a paraphrase of the Pentateuch very popular among Jewish women). This book is possibly the first Jewish book to be sold to subscribers by the printer's sheet. The publishers did not have the capital to finance such a large publication themselves. The book was published over five years, being completed in 1729. The Library's copy was purchased at the same time as the Witzzenhausen translation.

Barry Walfish, Librarian  
Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library

## Mark your calendar for the Friends' events of the season...

### Planned events for the 1995–96

#### Membership year

Time: All lectures commence at 8:00 pm in the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library unless alternate times are specified. Parking: For Friends attending evening meetings, underground parking is now available just north of the Robarts Library, and on the east side of St. George Street. There is a flat rate of \$4.50 after 5:00 pm.

#### Thursday 2 November

Greg Gatenby, *Watch Your Language: A History of the Harbourfront Reading Series*

#### Wednesday 7 February

J. Edward Chamberlin, Professor of English, University of Toronto. *The Worthy and the Worthless: Books of the Eighteen Nineties*

#### Thursday 28 March

The Gryphon Lecture on the History of the Book

Mirjam Foot, Director of Collections and Preservation at the British Library and distinguished historian of book-binding. *Aspects of the History of Bookbinding and Decoration*

#### Wednesday 10 April

Fred Schreiber, New York antiquarian bookseller and scholar. *Publish and Perish: the French Scholar Printers of the Sixteenth Century*

#### Exhibitions 1995

#### Continuing until 2 January 1996

David Jones exhibition

#### Exhibitions 1996

#### 15 January – 29 March 1996

Cooper & Beatty  
Exhibition opening: Tuesday 16 January 1996

#### 15 April – 28 June 1996

Italian literature in English  
Exhibition opening: Tuesday 16 April 1996

#### 15 July – 13 September 1996

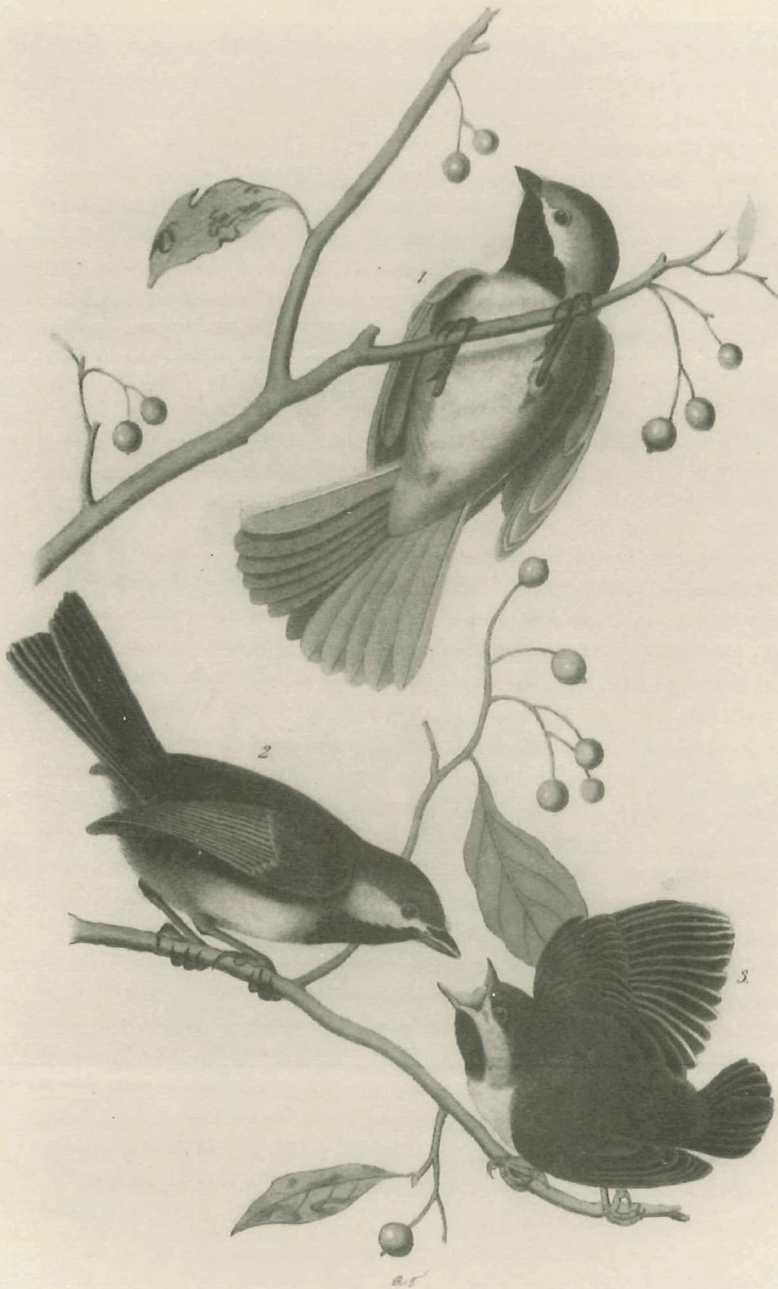
Seventeenth century sea atlases

#### 30 September 1996 – 3 January 1997

The 75th anniversary of the discovery of insulin

N° 26.

Pl 128.



*Hudson's Bay Titmouse.*

1. Male. 2. Female. 3. Young.



*John James Audubon's  
Birds of America —  
The Royal  
Octavo Edition*

The Fisher Rare Book Library was recently given, by Andrew and Roger Welsman, the highly prized and rare royal octavo edition of Audubon's *Birds of America*. It was the most important illustrated work on natural history published in America in the nineteenth century and brought the author fame and fortune. Audubon had an inauspicious beginning, born Jean Jacques Rabin, in 1785 in San Domingo, present-day Haiti, the illegitimate son of Jean Audubon, a French naval officer, merchant, and slave-trader, and Mlle. Jeanne Rabin, a Spanish Creole, who died shortly after his birth. At the age of six, he accompanied his father to France and it was there that he was formally adopted by his father and stepmother, Anne. He was given a gentleman's education but benefited little from any formal studies because his only interests were natural history and observing, catching and drawing birds.

At the age of eighteen, Audubon's father sent him to America to manage an estate he had purchased and to prevent the young Audubon from being conscripted into Napoleon's army. Audubon eagerly adopted America as his country and even anglicized his name. In a famous portrait of the mature Audubon painted by his son John Woodhouse Audubon, he is the epitome of the romantic American woodsman, dressed in buckskin, holding a gun, with a dog and horse at his side. In

*Hudson's Bay titmouse  
Plate 128 from Audubon's royal octavo  
edition of Birds of America*

1808 he married Lucy Bakewell, the daughter of an English immigrant, who encouraged his interest in drawing and was the chief bread-winner, working as a governess, most of their married life. They had two sons, Victor Gifford born in 1809 and John Woodhouse born in 1812.

In 1820 after numerous business failures, Audubon was seized with what he called his "Great idea". He would draw all the birds of America, life-size and in their natural habitats. These drawings would then be published in a "Great Work". In 1821, at the age of thirty-five, he began travelling through the United States and spent the next three years observing and drawing birds. Although never professionally trained as an artist, it was during this time that Audubon refined his technique as a painter and, after a great deal of experimentation, decided to work in water-colours using pastels for the wings of the birds. To attain the most life-like representation of the birds, he wired freshly-killed birds and drew them quickly before the colours faded. Once he had completed his portfolio of more than four hundred drawings, he searched for an expert engraver in both Philadelphia and New York. In 1826, having failed to find anyone who would take on the project, Audubon left for Britain where he was assured that there were master engravers.

Once in Britain, he was advised to finance the book by subscription. Issuing a book serially was a common method of publication in nineteenth century Britain and Europe. His original plan was to publish the work in eighty parts, each part consisting of five plates and priced at two guineas. It was finally completed in eighty-seven parts published from 1827 to 1838.

In Edinburgh he engaged William Home Lizars as his printer/engraver. The engravings were done on six-foot copper plates and printed on double elephant folios (39 1/2" x 29 1/2", untrimmed). While Lizars was working on the second part, there was a strike of colourists in his shop and Audubon transferred the project to the London engraver Robert Havell, Jr. The techniques of engraving, etching and aquatint for the half-tones, combined with



*Whooping crane*

*Plate 313 from Audubon's royal octavo edition of Birds of America*

Havell's superb colouring, produced the largest and most sumptuous ornithological work ever published, containing 400 species and 1065 birds set in a variety of American scenes and natural habitats.

Beginning in 1832, his sons also began working on the project. Victor came to England and managed the business while John Woodhouse, an artist in his own right, assisted with the drawings. When not overseeing his "Great Work", *Birds of America*, Audubon spent his time hiring agents to sell his work on commission or searching for subscribers himself. At £182/14/0 (\$1,000.00) per set, and extra if bound, this was not an easy task. Most of the subscriptions came from the British aristocracy or wealthy institutions. During the eleven years it took to publish *Birds of America*, some subscribers died, others despairing of the work being completed, cancelled their subscriptions, while still others failed to make payment. Audubon travelled to France for subscribers and, in the 1830s, he returned twice to America to complete or revise some of his drawings and to search for subscribers. He was able to attract a total of only 160 subscribers, many fewer than he had anticipated. The actual cost of publishing the elephant folio was £28,910/13/7 (\$115,640.00), not including the expenses of his family for the fourteen years he worked on the book. Unfortunately the University of Toronto Library's copy of this magnificent work was burned in the fire of 1890.

The text for the plates was issued separately as *Ornithological Biography*. Otherwise the British Copyright Act of 1709 would have required that a copy of the double elephant folio be deposited in nine British libraries. The letterpress contained valuable ornithological observations as well as some woodcuts of anatomy and the digestive organs of birds. These observations were interspersed with Audubon's delineations of American scenery and manners. Because of Audubon's lack of scientific knowledge and faulty early education, the text was closely copy edited by the Scottish naturalist and anatomist, William MacGillivray. Audubon paid for the

printing himself and it was issued in five volumes in Edinburgh between 1831 and 1839 in royal octavo at the cost of twenty-five shillings a volume. By June 1839 Audubon had finished an index to the "Great Work" entitled *Synopsis of the Birds of North America* (Edinburgh, 1839). This was a systematic classification of the birds by genera and species with reference to the plates in the double elephant folio and the text.

Even before the double elephant folio was complete, Audubon was determined to publish a small edition of *Birds of America*. He explains in the preface to that edition that he had been asked for several years to publish "a work on the Ornithology of our country, similar to my large work, but of such dimensions, and at such prices, as would enable every student or lover of nature to place it in his Library". His "Great Work" completed, John James Audubon returned to America in September 1839 and immediately began arranging for the publication of the first and complete American edition of *Birds of America*.

The production of the small edition was daunting and technologically difficult. First the six-foot "coppers", brought from Britain, had to be rearranged and renumbered according to the classification scheme in the *Synopsis of the Birds of North America*. Illustrations of some of the plates were re-drawn so that Audubon's original plan for the "Great Work" to have a single plate show the male, female and young of each species could be realized. Some Havell engravings had errors in proportion and needed revision. Sixty-five additional original drawings had to be incorporated, including seven new species of birds described in the *Ornithological Biography* but not illustrated, and seventeen birds for which there was neither illustration nor description. The additional drawings were thought to have been done by John Woodhouse but recent research (R. Tyler. *Audubon's Great National Work*. Austin, 1993) proves that the best and most sophisticated ones were done by Audubon himself.

Robert Havell, who by 1839 was working in New York, declined to work on

the project. This allowed Audubon to seek out a new printer and a new process. By the 1830s, lithography had replaced etching and engraving as the chief method of printing illustrations. It was faster, less expensive and more accurate for it allowed the lithographic artist to draw directly on soft porous stone. In September 1839, Audubon engaged one of the foremost lithographers in America, J. T. Bowen, a recent arrival from England working in Philadelphia, to do the hand-coloured lithography.

The reduction of the illustrations from the double elephant folio was done by John Woodhouse and later by his father using a camera lucida. The reduced image was projected onto a flat surface and outlined in red or brown pencil. The lithographic artist would fill in the details and complete the picture before laying it on the stone. According to Tyler, extant drawings indicate that a grid pattern was used in some cases to counteract the distortion caused by the camera lucida. Audubon's original watercolours were sometimes substituted for the Havell engraving in order to reproduce the vitality of Audubon's drawings. Bowen hired the artist R. Trimble to copy the original drawings and the plates done by him always bear his initials. The background scenes, done by Bowen and his staff, under the direction of Audubon or his son Victor, vary in quality. While they usually represent the natural habitat, some have whimsical touches such as the sailboat in the background of the picture of the Washington sea eagle, while others represent a favourite scene such as an antebellum mansion used as backdrop for the snowy heron. Many were done in haste and are not as integral a part of the picture as they were in the double elephant folio edition.

Bowen worked with incredible speed and by October, Audubon had engaged J.B. Chevalier of Philadelphia to oversee the printing. Chevalier appears as co-publisher with Audubon in the first volumes of the small edition. The text accompanied each plate and was taken primarily from the *Ornithological Biogra-*

phy, with some deletions, additional descriptions and omitting Audubon's homespun stories of American scenery and manners. The first numbers were available to the public by December 1839. By 1841 there were seventy people employed in the production of the royal octavo edition including lithographers, colourists and printers. The aesthetic quality of his works was always extremely important to Audubon and the small edition was printed on large octavo pages (one-eighth the size of a large sheet), with wide margins and easily readable text.

Like the "Great Work", the royal octavo edition was also sold on subscription. It was published complete in one hundred parts. Each part contained five plates and there were two parts issued each month at a cost of \$1.00 for each part or \$100 for the set. When the work was completed in 1844, the parts were bound in seven volumes, the full set costing \$125.00. Audubon's actual cost of producing the "small work" was fifty-seven cents per part, with the bulk of the cost (thirty-seven cents) for the lithography. Unlike the double elephant folio, Audubon had a tidy margin of profit.

The American edition of *Birds of America* was acclaimed by the critics, becoming a best-seller and a huge financial success. Although the number of complete sets printed is unknown, there were a total of 1,199 subscribers, chiefly American from major urban areas, including politicians, artists, merchants, learned societies and libraries. There were seventeen Canadian subscribers, most of whom are listed in the third volume printed in 1842, the same year that Audubon visited Canada travelling as far east as Quebec City in an attempt to sell subscriptions for the octavo edition and the remaining sets of the double elephant folio. There were also subscribers in England, Cuba and as far away as China. In spite of its popularity, very few copies of this first American edition remain. Many were broken up and the plates sold separately. There were nine editions published in the nineteenth century and the "small work" supported the family financially for years after Audubon's death in January 1851. In the twentieth century, there have been two facsimile reproductions and most recently it has been made available on compact disc.

Although considered by some a pale imitation of the "Great Work", the royal octavo edition of *Birds of America* was significant in its own right. It appealed to those who were scientists, artists or patriots and it was affordable, making it the most

popular and sought after natural history book in nineteenth-century America. It represented the best example of pre-Civil War American lithography. Its comprehensiveness and authenticity established Audubon's reputation as a naturalist. It had immense public appeal, published at the height of the American frenzy for national

works of art and literature extolling the virtues and grandeur of the American wilderness. This is an outstanding addition to our works on ornithology and natural history.

Margery Pearson, Librarian  
Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library



*Snowy owl*

Plate 28 from Audubon's royal octavo edition of *Birds of America*



## *Research in the Reading Room at the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, 1994 – 1995*

"Who uses these collections?" or "Why do you collect this?" are questions that Fisher Library staff hear repeatedly. The following notes about our manuscript collections give some idea of the variety of readers that this library attracts and the range of projects for which they peruse its collections.

During the past year the collection of Frederick Banting Papers was the most heavily used manuscript collection, consulted by thirteen researchers. These included a Munich television producer preparing a documentary on the discovery of insulin; a scholar at Cambridge University looking for information about Banting's trip to the Arctic for a study on Robert Flaherty; a writer from Korea planning a newspaper article and a journalist from Great Britain writing an article on Teddy Ryder. In what has become an annual event, the Eli Lilly Company brought twenty eminent medical researchers here to look at a special display of documents. With 1996 an anniversary year for the discovery of insulin, it is expected that this collection will continue to be popular.

Among our literary manuscripts the Margaret Atwood Papers remained a favourite source of study, especially with international scholars. They were examined by some twelve loyal readers who came each day for months at a time for purposes ranging from undergraduate term papers and doctoral dissertations to research for a book about Atwood. One afternoon last March there were no fewer than five readers perusing the Atwood papers: one from Denmark, one from Germany, one from Italy, one from Norway, and one from the United States.

The Earle Birney Papers, too, were frequently consulted. Elspeth Cameron used the collection extensively for her book, *Earle Birney: A Life*, as did the authors of forthcoming biographies of Margaret Laurence, Roy Daniells, and A.M. Klein.

Readers perused several other collections of authors' papers. The papers of W.A. Deacon were read for a French film on Gabrielle Roy. Those of Dennis Lee

were reviewed for an article on Rochdale College and the Laurence biography. The Douglas LePan collection was consulted for a dissertation on Walter Gordon and the Gordon Commission. The Gwendolyn MacEwen Papers were examined by Rosemary Sullivan for her biography, *Shadowmaker: The Life of Gwendolyn MacEwen*, as well as for the Laurence biography, and a dissertation for Murdoch University in Australia.

Correspondence and photographs from the papers of Dora Mavor Moore were used by Mavor Moore in his book of memoirs, *Reinventing Myself*.

Our collections of papers in natural history and science were also widely read. The papers of the ornithologist J.L. Baillie were consulted for the history of the Toronto Ornithological Club; an archaeological site report; and a report to an executive meeting of the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority. The collection of Agnes Chamberlin, whose beautiful book, *Canadian Wildflowers*, could be called the first Canadian coffee-table book, were consulted to document letters of her aunt, Catherine Parr Traill, and to aid in the preparation of a detailed inventory of the work of Chamberlin's daughter, Geraldine Moodie.

Another highly used collection is that of the Royal Canadian Institute which in its early years gave "science" a more inclusive meaning. Its Records were examined for information on Daniel Wilson, the Toronto Athenaeum, and a Paul Kane painting formerly owned by the Institute.

The papers of J.B. Tyrrell, the geologist, explorer and mining engineer, were read by eight researchers, including one from Whitehorse, for an article on Yukon mining from 1899 to 1920; a writer from Alabama looking for early geological survey photographs in North America; and others writing about the explorer, David Thompson. In addition, there were many requests for copies of photographs taken by Tyrrell on his Barren Lands' expeditions, and later in the Yukon.

Another highly popular collection, the James Mavor Papers, was consulted by eleven readers for such diverse reasons as

an exhibition on Toronto's Victorian Era Ball, a study of Doukhobor history in British Columbia, a bibliography on Mennonites, and a term paper on industrial relations.

Ten people read the papers of Sir Edmund Walker, president of the Bank of Commerce from 1907 to 1924 and an active supporter of the arts and sciences in Canada. These included the writer of a book on academic freedom, a researcher on Japanese art and Frank Lloyd Wright, and the curator of the exhibition on the Victorian Era Ball held in Toronto on 28 December 1897.

The biographer of the New York architect Isaac Newton Phelps Stokes needed to study the George Wrong Papers for references to a church and house designed by Stokes in Murray Bay, Québec, where Wrong spent his summers. A biographer of Sir Valentine Chirol, diplomat, traveller, and foreign editor of *The Times* from 1898 to 1912, studied the extensive correspondence files in the papers of J.O.P. Bland, who was *The Times* correspondent in Shanghai and Peking from 1897 to 1910. The W.C. White Papers contain Bishop White's extensive collection of photographs taken in China. His 1919 image of Jews in Kaifeng was used by a media company and a museum in Israel in a CD-ROM based on the museum's 1991 exhibition "Beyond the Sambatyon: The Myth of the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel".

The papers of Alan Jarvis were examined by the authorized biographer of Gerald and Sara Murphy. They were friends of Alan Jarvis and of F. Scott Fitzgerald. Dick and Nicole Diver, in Fitzgerald's *Tender Is the Night* are based on the Murphys. The Jarvis Papers were also consulted for material about Douglas Duncan, and Canadian art.

The compilers of *A Bibliography of Classical Numismatics in Canada* examined the papers of Fritz Heichelheim and were excited to find the William Harshaw Collection of William Boyne Papers here. Boyne was a nineteenth-century numismatist whose great coin collection was sold at Sotheby's in 1896 in two ten-day sessions.

The authors featured the Fisher Library's collections in a numismatics newsletter.

The printing records of the Hunter Rose firm were used in a history of commercial bookbinding in Canada; the recently acquired Cooper & Beatty Records were examined for references to the typographers and designers, Carl Dair, Hermann Zapf, and W.E. Trevett (also a president of the company).

Several professors scheduled classes at the Fisher Library and used the collections to demonstrate to their students the importance of original documents and sources in research. The diaries of John Frothingham, and selected papers from the Louis Melzack Collection and the Sir Allan MacNab Papers, for example, were shown to a Canadian history class studying the Rebellion of 1837. The papers of Earle

Birney, Ernest Buckler, Gwendolyn MacEwen and other authors were studied in a class on writing literary biography.

Most of the manuscripts and manuscript collections mentioned above were gifts over the years to the Fisher Library. It is

the generosity of our Friends and donors which has made it possible to support such varied research in the Library.

Edna Hajnal, Librarian  
Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library



## New Greeting Cards!

Look for the Library's new greeting and Christmas cards.

All cards are reproductions from material in the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library.



## In Memoriam — Robert Finch and Jack Robson

The Friends of the Fisher Library join the University of Toronto community in remembering the distinguished careers of two of our members: Prof. Robert Finch, who died on June 11th at the age of 95, and Prof. John Robson, who died on July 9th at the age of 68.

Robert Finch taught in the Dept. of French from 1928 until his retirement in 1970, and was a Senior Fellow of Massey College from its founding in 1963. He was also an accomplished writer, winning two Governor-General's awards for poetry, and

a musician and artist. He began donating his manuscripts, journals and correspondence in 1993 and the final installment arrived after his death.

In 1988 Robert Finch moved from his rooms over the main gate of Massey College to Belmont House. At that time he allowed the Fisher Library to choose from his extensive, diverse and valuable library. We were thus able to add to our collections volumes such as Voltaire's 1759 *L'esprit* and the artist John Nash's 1926 *Poisonous Plants*. Most appealing, if less valuable, is a presentation copy of Alfred de Vigny's *Cinq-Mars* (1859) which Robert acquired in Paris in the twenties by selling his coat. He then had the volume bound by his friend Douglas Duncan.

Jack Robson's academic career was highlighted by his general editorship of

the great thirty-three volume edition of the *Collected Works of John Stuart Mill*, completed in 1991. He taught in the Dept. of English at Victoria College from 1958 on, serving as Principal of the College from 1971 to 1976.

In 1990 the Fisher Library was given the archives of the Mill project, which includes a holograph manuscript of Mill's essay "*On the Use of History*" and several Mill letters. In 1993 Jack donated his superb collection of Mill and his contemporaries, which includes first editions of both John Stuart and James Mill together with many of their elusive ephemeral pamphlets. Jack was a regular attendee of Friends' meetings and addressed a gathering, on Mill and books of course, in his inimitable witty manner. He was a very valued and supportive Friend.

## Editor's Note

This issue was edited by Gayle Garlock, Katharine Martyn and Anne Jocz, with photographs by Philip Ower, and editorial layout by Maureen Morin. Comments and/or suggestions should be sent to Gayle Garlock, Director, Development and Public Affairs, University of Toronto Library, Toronto, Ontario M5S 1A1 (416) 978-7655.

*The Halcyon: The Newsletter of the Friends of The Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library* is published twice a year in November and June. *Halcyon* includes short articles on recent noteworthy gifts and acquisitions of the Fisher Rare Book Library, recent exhibitions in the Fisher Library, activities of the Friends and other short articles of interest to the Friends.

Members of the editorial board of *Halcyon* are Gayle Garlock, Editor, Anne Jocz from the Fisher Library and Veronica Fisher, Graphic Artist of the Library.



H·A·L·C·Y·O·N

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