

## CANADIANA

The Library's extensive Canadian holdings, which include much manuscript as well as printed material, are strong in both historical and literary works. In addition to many separate special collections (James Mavor Collection, Louis Melzack Collection, J. Stuart Fleming Collection, J.B. Tyrrell papers, Sir Edmund Walker papers), there is a focus on the early history of Canada, particularly the search for the Northwest Passage and for Franklin, overland exploration of northwestern Canada, and works on colonization and emigration. The Fisher Library holds the University Library's reference collection of Canadian literature. From *The New-Year Verses of the Printers Lad* printed in Quebec in 1766 to the latest novel written by Margaret Atwood, the Library attempts to acquire all editions, and as many translations as possible, of literary works—poetry, fiction and drama—by Canadian authors. Canadian literary manuscripts are also actively collected and include the papers of Duncan Campbell Scott, Mazo De La Roche, Earle Birney, Margaret Atwood, Dennis Lee, Josef Škvorecký, and Erika Ritter.

## HEBRAICA AND JUDAICA

The Fisher Library has several significant collections of Hebraica and Judaica, including unique manuscript and archival resources. The Friedberg Collection is comprised of Hebrew manuscripts and early printed books including some of the oldest specimens of Hebrew texts to have survived. The tenth-century codex of *Halakhot pesukot*, a legal compendium, is one of the earliest intact Hebrew codices in existence. The Price Collection holds important printed rabbinic material, and is especially strong in responsa and Talmudic commentaries.

## THE HISTORY AND ART OF THE BOOK

Collections in the broad area of book history and print culture include examples of early printed books (Incunabula Collection, STC Collection) and other genre collections (Yellowbacks, Chapbooks, British almanacs, Canadian pamphlets and broadsides, Gay pulp fiction),

and collections focussing on publishers, printers, designers, individual presses, binders and illustrators. Another strength lies in the booktrade (Antiquarian Booksellers and Auction catalogues), and the Louis Blake Duff Collection of 'books on books'.

## DIGITAL COLLECTIONS

Completed projects to date include *Anatomia* (early illustrations of human anatomy), *The Barren Lands* (exploratory surveys of the Barren Lands region from the J.B. Tyrrell Collection), *The Discovery and Early Development of Insulin* (from the Banting, Best and related collections), and *Papyri*. Ongoing digitization efforts are focussed on various aspects of Canadiana: Canadian Pamphlets and Broad­sides, Canadian trade journals (*Canadian Printer and Publisher*) and the Arts and Letters Club scrapbooks.



## GENERAL INFORMATION

The resources of the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library may be used by all scholars and researchers, whether or not they are members of the University of Toronto community. The Library supports an active exhibition program featuring three major exhibitions each year, and publishes catalogues for all its current exhibitions, as well as posters, cards, broadsides and books based on its collections. There is a flourishing Friends of the Fisher group, hosting four annual lectures on themes relating to the history and art of the book, libraries, and collections. ¶ The Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library is located at 120 St. George Street, at the north-west corner of St. George and Harbord Streets on the University of Toronto campus.



### HOURS, YEAR-ROUND

Monday to Friday, 9:00 AM to 4:45 PM  
Closed on statutory and University holidays

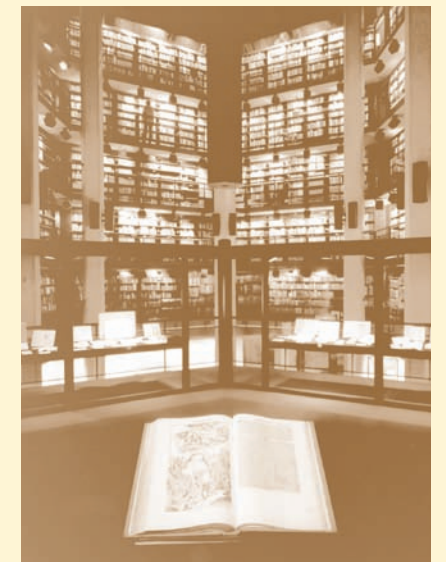
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UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO  
LIBRARIES

# THOMAS University FISHER of RARE Toronto BOOK Libraries LIBRARY





## AN OVERVIEW OF THE COLLECTIONS

The collections of books, manuscripts and other materials are many and varied, reflecting the wide diversity of teaching and research conducted at the University of Toronto by its own faculty and students, visiting scholars, and the general public. Chronologically, the range is from a 1789 BCE Babylonian cuneiform tablet from Ur, to the works of contemporary Canadian writers. The manuscript holdings include both individual early manuscripts such as the *Codex Torontonensis*—a copy of the four gospels penned in Byzantium around the year 1050—and collections of personal papers, both literary and historical, ranging from Nobel Prize winners Frederick Banting, Derek Walcott, and John Polanyi to contemporary Canadian authors. Among the oldest printed books in the collection are a copy of Johannes Balbus's *Catholicon*, printed in the 1460s, possibly by Johann Gutenberg (placed on long-term deposit in the Library); an early Hebrew imprint, Moses Maimonides' *Mishneh Torah* printed in Rome about 1475; the *Concilium zu Constencz*, printed in Augsburg in 1483, with hand-coloured woodcuts; and the *Compost et Kalendrier des bergères*, an almanac printed in Paris in 1499.



The Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library houses the Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, founded in 1955. The present building was opened in 1973 and is named in honour of Thomas Fisher (1792–1874), who came from Yorkshire to Upper Canada in 1821. In 1973 his great-grandsons, Sidney and Charles Fisher, donated to the Library their collections of Shakespeare, various twentieth-century authors, and the etchings of the seventeenth-century artist, Wenceslaus Hollar. Since that time the Library has grown to approximately 600,000 volumes and 2500 linear metres of manuscript holdings. Additional information on all aspects of the Library and its collections can be found on our website at <http://www.library.utoronto.ca/fisher>

¶ The greatest strengths of the Library lie in the fields of British, European, Caribbean and Canadian literature, philosophy, the history of science and medicine, Canadiana, Hebraica and Judaica, and the history and art of the book. Through our Digital Special Collections program we are now making some of our unique resources available to those beyond our own community.

## LITERATURE

The general collections of the Fisher Library contain first editions of many of the most notable English literary works as well as important and extensive holdings for many individual authors and genres. Important separate special collections include the Sidney Fisher Collection of Shakespeare, including all four folio editions; the Joseph A. Brabant Collection of Lewis

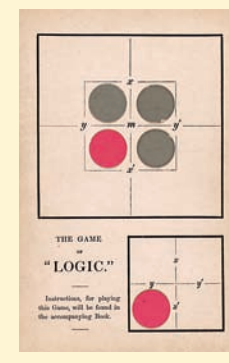
Carroll; the Alfred T. De Lury Collection of Yeats and his circle; the Norman J. Endicott Collection of English literary works of the period 1880–1930, and several other individual author collections.

¶ The European literature collections encompass the early literatures of Italy (Rime, Libretti and Italian Play collections), Spain (Milton A. Buchanan Collection), Portugal (Ralph Stanton Collection), France (Rousseau, and Harcourt Brown Voltaire collections), and Czechoslovakia (Petlice Collection).

¶ Highlights from the Caribbean literature collection include the papers of Derek Walcott and Lorna Goodison and the archives of the Trinidad Theatre Company.

## PHILOSOPHY

The holdings are strong in the works of early philosophers (Aristotle, Bacon, Hobbes) as



well as the writings of nineteenth- and twentieth-century thinkers (Bertrand Russell Collection, John G. Slater Collection of British and American Philosophy, Einstein Collection, Michael Polanyi Collection). The Michael Walsh Philosophy Collection further strengthens our holdings in all areas of Western philosophical thought.

## THE HISTORY OF SCIENCE AND MEDICINE

The Library has large and comprehensive holdings in several key areas in the history of science. The general Science Collection covers many branches of theoretical and applied science. One of the principal focuses is the science of the Renaissance prior to Galileo, whose work, and that of his contemporaries, form the core of the Stillman Drake Galileo Collection. Other strengths in the History of Science include the Darwin Collection; the Victorian Natural History Collection; and the Baillie ornithology collection.

¶ The two chief collections in the history of medicine are the Jason A. Hannah Collection and the Academy of Medicine Collection. These address all aspects of Western medicine, and are particularly strong in the areas of obstetrics and gynecology, anatomy, dentistry, psychoanalysis, and Canadian medical history. Other strengths are popular medicine, eighteenth-century British medical works, ephemeral publications, such as patent medicine literature, and the discovery and development of insulin (Banting, Best and Collip papers).