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First You Dream, Then You Die
FRANCIS M. NEVINS, JR.

On September 25, 1968, a 64-year-old man, one-legged and wheelchair-bound and looking almost ninety, died of a stroke in his room at Manhattan’s Sheraton Russell Hotel. His name was Cornell Woolrich. He was the greatest writer of suspense fiction that ever lived. His two dozen novels and more than two hundred stories and novelettes had the same wrenching impact, the same resonations of terror and anguish and loneliness and despair, as the darkest films of his cinematic soul-brother, Alfred Hitchcock. He had lived as a recluse with his mother in a series of New York residential hotels, trapped in a bizarre love-hate relationship with her and in the quicksand of his own homosexual self-contempt. When she died, he cracked, and began his own long descent to the grave. He had the most wretched life of any American writer since Poe, and his funeral was attended by exactly five people. He left no survivors but did leave a rich legacy of fiction whose principal beneficiary since his death has been Columbia University. Under his will, virtually all his literary properties were placed in a trust fund, named for Woolrich’s mother, to provide scholarships for Columbia students.

The Columbia connection with the Woolrich family goes back to before the author’s birth. Woolrich’s mother (1874-1957) was born Claire Attalie Tarler, and one of her brothers, George Cornell Tarler (1876-1945) graduated from Columbia Law School in 1899 and went on to a distinguished legal and diplomatic career. Shortly after the turn of the century, Claire married Genaro Hop-

Opposite: Artist Larry Schwinger’s rendition of the amnesiac hero searching the city for his lost self in Cornell Woolrich’s 1941 novel The Black Curtain.
Francis M. Nevins, Jr.

ley-Woolrich, a civil engineer apparently of Latin American descent. Their only child, Cornell George Hopley-Woolrich, was born in New York City on December 4, 1903. The marriage quickly fell apart, and Woolrich spent much of his childhood in Mexico with his bridge-building father.

At the age of eight he was taken by his maternal grandfather to Mexico City’s Palace of Fine Arts to see a traveling French company perform Puccini’s Madame Butterfly, and the experience gave him a sudden sharp insight into color and drama, and his first sense of tragedy. Three years later, on a night when he looked up at the stars from the valley of Anahuac, he understood that someday, like Cio-Cio-San, he too would have to die. From that moment on he was haunted by a sense of doom. “I had that trapped feeling,” he wrote in his unfinished and unpublished autobiography, “like some sort of a poor insect that you’ve put inside a down-turned glass, and it tries to climb up the sides, and it can’t, and it can’t, and it can’t.”

During his adolescence he returned to New York and lived with his grandfather and aunt and mother in the grandfather’s house on 113th Street, near Morningside Park, a short walk from the Columbia campus. In 1921 he enrolled as a Columbia undergraduate, with his father paying the tuition from Mexico City. His major was journalism but his idol, like that of many young men his age, was F. Scott Fitzgerald, and his dream was to become an author or a professional dancer, for these were the most romantic occupations in the world. In two of his courses, one on creative writing and another on the novel, he got to know another student of about his age, a man who went on to win international eminence as an historian of ideas, and to hold the most prestigious academic position Columbia offered.

In the summer of 1970 Jacques Barzun still held the title of University Professor, with responsibility for a generous assortment of pedagogic and administrative work. The afternoon I visited his office in Low Library, he took more than an hour out of his sched-
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He had to leave for a meeting, but said that if I cared to wait till he returned we could continue our talk for the rest of the afternoon. I know an unrefuseable offer when I hear one. I waited. Barzun admitted that he hadn’t known Woolrich at all well, but his memories of a shy and introspective youth with a keen interest in literature and under the complete domination of his mother squared with everything I had learned about that haunted man.

During an illness in his junior year—either a foot infection or jaundice, depending on which autobiographical account you believe—Woolrich fought boredom by toying with the first draft of a novel, writing in pencil on sheets of loose yellow paper he’d scrounged from around the 113th Street house, with a cardboard wedge from one of his laundered shirts as a support. From the first he was a rapid writer. “The stream of words was like an electric arc leaping across the intervening space from pole to opposite pole, from me to paper. . . . It was tiring and it wouldn’t let go. . . . You couldn’t stop it, it had to stop by itself. Then it fizzled out again at last, as unpredictably as it had begun. It left me feeling spent. . . .” By the time he was well enough to return to school he’d become a writing addict. Every evening after supper, from nine till midnight, he’d sit in a second-floor room, the door closed, the family out of hearing, a Burmese elephant-head lamp lit on a pedestal in the corner behind him, and scribble furiously. By late spring of 1924 his first draft was done, and he borrowed a friend’s typewriter to turn it into readable form. Almost before he knew it that novel sold, and Woolrich quit Columbia to pursue his Fitzgerald-esque dream of bright lights and gay music and a meteoric literary career.

Woolrich’s early mainstream fiction is saturated with the Fitzgerald influence, especially that first novel, *Cover Charge* (Boni & Liveright, 1926), which chronicles the lives and loves of the Jazz Age’s gilded youth, the child-people, flitting from thrill to thrill, conversing in a mannered slang which, sixty years later, reads like
the gibberings of creatures from another galaxy. But if nothing else, the novel is eerily prophetic in the way its protagonist's fate foreshadows Woolrich's own. Ballroom dancer Alan Walker winds up alone, in a cheap hotel room, his legs all but useless after a drunken auto smash-up, abandoned by the women he at various times loved, contemplating suicide. "I hate the world," he cries out. "Everything comes into it so clean and goes out so dirty."

This debut novel was followed by *Children of the Ritz* (Boni & Liveright, 1927), a frothy concoction about a spoiled heiress's marriage to her chauffeur, which won Woolrich a $10,000 prize and a contract from First National Pictures for the movie rights. He was invited to Hollywood to help with the adaptation and stayed on as a staff writer. Besides his movie chores and an occasional story or article for magazines like *College Humor* and *Smart Set*, he completed three more novels during these years. Early in
1931, after a brief, inexplicable and disastrous marriage with a producer's daughter, Woolrich fled back to Manhattan and his mother. His last mainstream novel, *Manhattan Love Song* (Godwin, 1932) anticipates the motifs of his later fiction with its love-struck young couple cursed by a malignant fate which leaves one dead and the other desolate. But over the next two years he sold next to nothing and was soon deep in debt, reduced to sneaking into movie palaces by the fire doors. What he didn't know was that he was on the brink of a new life as a writer, a life so different from his earlier literary career that in his autobiography he said he wished his previous fiction “had been written in invisible ink and the reagent had been thrown away.” He was about to become the foremost suspense writer of all time.

It was in 1934 that Woolrich decided to abandon his hopes of mainstream literary prestige and concentrate on the lowly genre of mystery fiction. He sold three stories to pulp magazines that year, ten more in 1935, and was soon an established professional whose name was a fixture on the covers of *Black Mask, Detective Fiction Weekly, Dime Detective* and other pulps. The more than 100 stories and novelettes which he sold to the pulps during the Thirties are richly varied in type, including quasi police procedurals, rapid-action whizbangs, and encounters with the occult. But the best and the best-known of them are the tales of pure edge-of-the-seat suspense, and even their titles signal their predominant mood of bleakness and despair. “I Wouldn’t Be in Your Shoes.” “Speak to Me of Death.” “All at Once, No Alice.” “Dusk to Dawn.” “Men Must Die.” “If I Should Die Before I Wake.” “The Living Lie Down with the Dead.” “Charlie Won’t Be Home Tonight.” “You’ll Never See Me Again.” These and dozens of other Woolrich suspense stories evoke with awesome power the desperation of those who walk the city’s darkened streets and the terror that lurks at noonday in commonplace settings. In his hands even such clichéd storylines as the race to save the innocent man from the electric chair and the amnesiac searching for his lost self resonate
with human anguish. Woolrich's world is a feverish place where the prevailing emotions are loneliness and fear and the prevailing action a race against time and death. His most characteristic detective stories end with the discovery that no rational account of events is possible, and his suspense stories tend to close with the terror not dissipated but omnipresent, like God.

The typical Woolrich settings are the seedy hotel, the cheap dance hall, the rundown movie house and the precinct station backroom. The overwhelming reality in his world, at least during the Thirties, is the Depression, and Woolrich has no peers at putting us inside the life of a frightened little guy in a tiny apartment with no money, no job, a hungry wife and children, and anxiety eating him like a cancer. If a Woolrich protagonist is in love, the beloved is likely to vanish in such a way that the protagonist not only can't find her but can't convince anyone she ever existed. Or, in another classic Woolrich situation, the protagonist comes to after a blackout—the result of amnesia, drugs, hypnosis or whatever—and little by little becomes certain that he committed a murder or other crime while out of himself. The police are rarely sympathetic, in fact they are the earthly counterparts of the malignant powers above; and their main function is to torment the helpless.

All we can do about this nightmare we live in is to create, if we are very lucky, a few islands of love and trust to sustain us and help us forget. But love dies while the lovers go on living, and Woolrich excels at portraying the corrosion of a once beautiful relationship. Yet he created very few irredeemably evil characters; for if one loves or needs love, Woolrich makes us identify with that person, all of his or her dark side notwithstanding.

Purely as technical exercises, many of Woolrich's novels and stories are awful. They don't make the slightest bit of sense. And that's the point: neither does life. Nevertheless some of his tales, usually thanks to outlandish coincidence, manage to end quite happily. But since he never used a series character, the reader can never know in advance whether a particular Woolrich story will be light
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or dark, will end in triumph or despair, which is one of many reasons why his work is so hauntingly suspenseful.

In 1940 Woolrich joined the migration of pulp mystery writers from lurid-covered magazines to hardcover books, but his suspense novels carry over the same motifs, beliefs and devices that energized his shorter fiction. The eleven novels he published during the Forties, six under his own byline, four as William Irish and one as George Hopley, are unsurpassable classics in the poetry of terror. *The Bride Wore Black*, *The Black Curtain*, *Black Alibi*, *Phantom Lady*, *The Black Angel*, *Deadline at Dawn*, *The Black Path of Fear*, *Night Has a Thousand Eyes*, *Waltz into Darkness*, *Rendezvous in Black*, *I Married a Dead Man*, these titles, all pub-
published between 1940 and 1948, make up the finest group of suspense novels ever written.

Those were his peak years, in which he became a wealthy man and a superstar of his genre. Publishers began issuing hardcover and paperback collections of his shorter fiction, which then came to the attention of the story editors of the great dramatic radio series of the Forties, leading to dozens of Woolrich-based dramas on Suspense and Mollé Mystery Theatre and similar programs. Meanwhile Hollywood rediscovered the boy wonder of the Twenties and paid him handsomely for the right to make movies out of large numbers of his novels and stories. These pictures helped shape the uniquely Forties brand of suspense movies known today as film noir. But all the money and adulation didn’t make Woolrich happy. In a letter of February 2, 1947 to Columbia’s poet and professor Mark Van Doren, he seemed to blame his unhappiness on the fact that he was revered only as a mystery writer, not as a literary figure. “I don’t like to look back on the Columbia days for that reason; the gap between expectation and accomplishment is too wide.” On the other hand, impenetrable as the shield of self-contempt was with which Woolrich had surrounded himself, it’s unlikely he would have been any happier if he had been acclaimed as another Scott Fitzgerald.

Around the end of the Forties Woolrich’s mother became seriously ill, and that combined with his personal problems seemed to paralyze his ability and desire to write. During the Fifties he published very little, but he and his mother continued to live in their comfortable isolation, for his magazine stories proved to be as adaptable to television as they’d been to radio a decade earlier, and almost all the classic TV dramatic series—Ford Theater, Schlitz Playhouse of Stars, Alfred Hitchcock Presents, Climax!, even the prestigious Playhouse 90—presented live or filmed versions of his fiction.

The day his mother died, in 1957, was the day he began to die himself, but in his case the process dragged on for more than ten
years. Diabetic, alcoholic, wracked by self-hate and loneliness, he dragged out the last years of his life. He continued to write but left unfinished much more than he completed, and the only new work that saw print in the Sixties was a handful of final "tales of love and despair." He developed gangrene in his leg and let it go untended for so long that when he finally sought medical help the doctor had no choice but to amputate. After the operation he lived in a wheelchair, unable to learn how to walk on an artificial leg. On September 25, 1968, he died of a stroke, leaving unfinished two novels, a collection of short stories and an autobiography, the typescripts of all of which can be seen in the Rare Book and Manuscript Library. He had prepared a long list of titles for stories he'd never even begun, and one of these captures the essence of his life and world in a single perfect phrase: *First You Dream, Then You Die.*

"I was only trying to cheat death," he wrote in a fragment found among his papers. "I was only trying to surmount for a little while the darkness that all my life I surely knew was going to come rolling in on me some day and obliterate me. I was only trying to stay alive a little brief while longer, after I was already gone." In the end, of course, he had to die as we all do; but as long as there are readers to be haunted by the fruit of his life, by the way he took his wretched psychological environment and his sense of entrapment and solitude and turned them into poetry of the shadows, the world Woolrich imagined lives.
Sherlock Holmes: The Detective As Hero

MARY WERTHEIM

In November, 1886 when, after several rejections, Dr. Arthur Conan Doyle's novelette, *A Study in Scarlet*, was finally accepted for publication by Ward, Lock and Company in *Beeton's Christmas Annual*, 1887, no one involved suspected that Sherlock Holmes and Dr. John H. Watson were destined to become two of the most popular figures in literary history. The lack of fanfare surrounding their debut is illustrated by the fact that, although the publishers liked the tale, they had no inclination to rush its appearance or to increase their original offer of £25 for the story and all rights to it. Doyle, eager for ready money, accepted the terms and never earned another penny from it. But Doyle did not remain an impecunious author for long. Over the next forty years, the doings of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson provided him with an enormous, steady income.

*A Study in Scarlet*, not the most carefully plotted of the four novelettes and fifty-six stories that comprise the Canon, the term used for the complete collection by ardent admirers, served to introduce Holmes and Watson to their adoring public. The publication of "The Adventure of Shoscombe Old Place" in the *Strand Magazine* for January 1927 brought the Sherlockian saga to a close. The universal appeal these works achieved is obvious in the light of a report issued in 1958 by the Doyle Estate stipulating that it was drawing royalties in seventy-two currencies. More recently, Ronald Burt De Waal, in *The World Bibliography of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson* (1974), lists 920 foreign editions in fifty languages, thirty of which are English language readers published in Japan for use by students. Editions are available in Braille and shorthand as well.
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When works of literature endure cross-culturally, are read in French, Telugu and Uzbek, and survive the cataclysmic social changes that occurred during the years between the disintegration of the British Empire with its comforting Victorian certainties and the development of the chaotic technocracy that is the modern world, it is reasonable to assume that readers are responding to the intrapsychic similarities between people which outweigh differences caused by widely disparate national backgrounds. For certain readers, immersion in the world of Sherlock Holmes and the good doctor extends beyond simply reading the works. Since the establishment of the Baker Street Irregulars in 1934, a club exclusively for male devotees of the Canon, other clubs called Scion Societies have been formed all over the world. In Denmark, Burma, and New Zealand, the Sherlockian can find a congenial environment in which to enjoy what for many people has become a major hobby. For those who wish more than occasional club meetings, commercial ventures based upon the characters of Holmes and Watson abound as well. Conventions, cruises, mystery weekends, even international tours that feature sites mentioned in the Canon, are among the travel industry’s perennial offerings. Innumerable other businesses have cashed in on the public’s awareness of these two characters, pointing up their importance as universal symbols.

The world Doyle created in the Sherlockian saga conveys an aura of verisimilitude convincing in its recreation of the social fabric of Holmes’s time. Richness of detail and intriguing characterizations are Doyle’s strengths. To his dedicated readers, it hardly matters that his plots are sometimes rather thin. In “A Scandal in Bohemia,” the first of the Holmesian short stories, Holmes fails to recover a photograph that reveals Wilhelm Gottsreich Sigismund von Ormstein, Grand Duke of Cassel-Felstein and hereditary king of Bohemia, in the company of Irene Adler, a retired prima donna from New Jersey. Holmes, rarely described in especially positive terms, perhaps because Doyle retained a lifelong
ambivalence toward his most enduring character, experiences a flash of attraction for Miss Adler. Lest the reader mistakenly assume that Holmes is susceptible to the temptations of the flesh, Watson is quick to explain that Holmes does not dabble in love.

He asserts, "It was not that he felt any emotion akin to love for Irene Adler. All emotions, and that one particularly, were abhorrent to his cold, precise, but admirably balanced mind. He was, I take it, the most perfect reasoning and observing machine that the world has seen; but, as a lover, he would have placed himself in a false position. He never spoke of the softer passions, save with a
gibe and a sneer.” In the same story, we learn that Holmes is a cocaine addict given to the mood swings induced by this still popular drug. Doyle, always a keen observer, used his medical knowledge to add realistic touches to the narrative, even basing Holmes’s methods of circumstantial and inferential deduction upon techniques employed by Dr. Joseph Bell, one of his professors at Edinburgh University.

Holmes is a mythic figure, larger than life, unencumbered with the intellectual, moral, and emotional clutter that prevents lesser mortals from dealing with the world objectively and controlling their own destinies. Holmes is presented to the reader as a demigod, deriving power from undisclosed sources, yet mortal. He bleeds. Literally without peer, he is one of a kind, an awesome figure at the service of the public, yet in a class by himself. The need to engage in the kind of personal discourse that cements relationships between people is absent from his character, and he is apparently unaware of his patronizing attitude toward Watson. The reader accepts the inferior position of Watson as just, acknowledging that Holmes cannot be expected to behave as ordinary people do. Watson must be satisfied with whatever pleases Holmes and relinquish his desire for what Holmes cannot supply. Occasionally his patience is rewarded, and he is singled out for praise. In “The Five Orange Pips,” for example, during one of Watson’s many visits to Baker Street, the downstairs doorbell rings. “Who could come to-night? Some friend of yours, perhaps?” Watson asks. “‘Except yourself I have none.’ he answered. ‘I do not encourage visitors.’”

In spite of his unattractive exclusiveness, Holmes wins the reader’s confidence by enunciating certain truths about the perceptual limitations of most people from which he is undeniably exempt. In “A Scandal in Bohemia” he chastises Watson for failing to recall how many steps lead up to their second-floor rooms at 221 Baker Street, even though he has ascended the staircase many times. “‘Quite so!’” Sherlock declares. “‘You have not observed. And
Yet you have seen. That is just my point. Now I know that there are seventeen steps, because I have both seen and observed.' "The reader recognizes the difference between active observation and passive seeing, having incurred the consequences of the latter many times, and is relieved that Sherlock Holmes does not suffer from this intellectual shortcoming.

Yet, from the outset of the Canon, Holmes is such a reptilian individual that his visual acuity, supreme rationality, and passion to rid society of its criminal element hardly mitigate the limitations of his ruthless intellectualism. When in *A Study in Scarlet* young Stamford brings Holmes and Watson together, having learned that both men wish to share rooms in order to reduce expenses, his remarks make it clear that human considerations do not prevent Holmes from pursuing his goals: "'It is not easy to express the inexpressible. . . . Holmes is a little too scientific for my tastes—it approaches to cold-bloodnesses. I could imagine his giving a friend a little pinch of the latest vegetable alkaloid, not out of malevolence, you understand, but simply out of a spirit of inquiry in order to have an accurate idea of the effects. To do him justice, I think that he would take it himself with the same readiness. He appears to have a passion for definite and exact knowledge.'" The scientist in Watson approves of Holmes's search for accuracy. He is, nevertheless, shocked to learn that Holmes beat cadavers in the dissecting room with sticks in order to verify the extent to which bruises might be produced after death. Watson is a physician, so his squeamishness is somewhat surprising, especially when one considers the treatment usually afforded corpses by medical students. However, he speaks with the voice of a Victorian public simultaneously attracted and repelled by gruesome incidents and imagery. Doyle, well aware of the appetite of horror, wrote several grisly tales, including "Lot No. 249," "The Case of Lady Sannox," and "The Brazilian Cat."

At the initial meeting between Holmes and Watson, Holmes expresses enthusiasm about a reagent he has discovered that is pre-
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precipitated exclusively by hemoglobin. Since the presence of blood at the scene of a crime is sometimes difficult to detect, Holmes is excited by the implications of his find for police work and anxious to demonstrate its effectiveness to Watson and Stamford. He digs a bodkin into his finger and draws some blood into a pipette and then transfers it to a liter of water. For a time the solution remains clear, but suddenly it changes color and a brown dust filters to the bottom of the vessel. In a symbolic sense, the incident parallels Watson's relationship to Holmes. In his inert state Holmes appears cold and distant, but his personality contains elements that are activated by the needs of clients for his services. Thus Watson learns at the onset of their relationship that no matter how concealed Holmes's humanity may appear to be, its current runs deep beneath his aloof facade.

In contrast to Holmes, Watson is a very fallible mortal who tends toward the commonplace. One of his primary functions in the tales is to be wrong, to be a foil for Holmes's almost invariable rightness. Watson's blunders in logic and bewilderment in the face of tangled circumstances provide contrast to Holmes's superior reasoning. Twice married, engaged in the prosaic effort to earn a living as a moderately successful physician with a not too devoted practice, and discomfitted by inept servants, Watson accepts his subservient position in Holmes's life, although he sometimes complains about it. In "The Adventure of the Greek Interpreter," he tells us that Holmes's self-containment makes him uncomfortable at times: "This reticence upon his part had increased the somewhat inhuman effect which he produced upon me, until sometimes I found myself regarding him as an isolated phenomenon, a brain without a heart, as deficient in human sympathy as he was preeminent in intelligence. His aversion to women, and his disinclination to form new friendships were both typical of his unemotional character, but not more so than his suppression of every reference to his own people." As the representative of Doyle's readership, Watson knows from experience the problems
"The Death of Sherlock Holmes"; Sydney Paget's illustration of the detective and his arch-enemy, Moriarity, struggling over the Reichbach Falls.
Dear Miss Price,

Many thanks for your very kind note. I am glad the story had so happy an ending. Holmes died in the Kansas papers, so there is an end to his adventures, but I was none the less very interested to hear your curious experiences.

Thanking you again

Yours faithfully

A. Conan Doyle.
attendant upon living in an imperfect world, subjected to random events which often have fateful consequences. He met Holmes as an indirect consequence of his adventures in Afghanistan. Severely injured, by a Jezail bullet that shattered his shoulder bone and damaged the subclavian artery, Watson barely escaped capture by the murderous Ghazis. His orderly, Murray, who makes only a brief appearance in *A Study in Scarlet*, saved the young doctor's life by throwing him across a pack horse and bringing him to the British lines. Unfortunately, his troubles were not yet over. In the base hospital at Peshawar, the already weakened Watson contracted enteric fever, clung to life for months, and ultimately returned to England an emaciated shadow of his former self. It was during his convalescence that the meeting with Holmes took place. Consequently, Watson has a sincere appreciation for the role other people play in ameliorating the harsh effects of random happenings. After all, if it had not been for Murray and his selfless courage, it is doubtful that he could have survived to meet Holmes.

While resolving criminal cases, Sherlock Holmes and his cronies occasionally fail to prevent casualties from occurring. Knowing what can be achieved through the intervention of others, Watson is not at all surprised to learn, as he relates in "The Adventure of the Greek Interpreter," that Holmes's brother, Mycroft, a corpulent, lazy and solipsistic caricature of Sherlock, who belongs to the Diogenes Club, an organization devoted to the elimination of conversation, has been consulted by Mr. Melas, a Greek interpreter who has become entangled in a precarious situation. Because of his knowledge of the Greek language, Melas is induced to go to a strange house where he meets a fellow Greek, a Mr. Kratides who has been unlawfully imprisoned. At great risk to his safety, Melas learns that Kratides is being starved to death. Although he has every reason to fear for his life, his conscience dictates that an immediate attempt must be made to save Kratides before his vile captors succeed in killing him. In the course of the narrative, Melas is forced to return to the scene of the crime for
a second time. He is locked into a gas-filled room with the unfortunate Kratides. The Holmes brothers arrive too late to save Kratides, but Melas survives and explains that the torturers intended to force Kratides to forfeit his family’s property. Similarly, in “The Adventure of the Dancing Men,” Holmes solves the mystery of the cryptogram brought to him by Mr. Hilton Cubitt, but despite the aid of Watson and the police, he is too late to prevent the murder of his client and the attempted suicide of his wife.

Surely the degree of success achieved by Holmes and his support team in tales such as these is not sufficient to validate Sherlock’s reputation as a great detective; it is not what Holmes and Watson actually do that accounts for their enduring popularity. There are other factors inducing addicts of these characters in particular and detective fiction in general to return compulsively for more. Adults know that they cannot tear those who offend them limb from limb. Hostile wishes pervade everyday life, but they must routinely be consigned to the level of fantasy. Residual rage and feelings of helplessness are sublimated through art. Detectives in fiction act as intermediaries between what society dictates and what the individual really desires. They move freely between upper and underworlds, often having closer ties to the lower echelons than they do to the forces of law and order. Sherlock Holmes has the highest respect for Professor Moriarity, “the Napoleon of crime,” and head of a vastly successful criminal organization. Then, as now, contrary to the adage, crime pays very well, and the public knows it. The detective acts in fantasy as the reader’s surrogate; the aberrations of his personality and the mythic charisma that surround him encourage the reader’s identification. But the detective is also accepted because he differs from the reader. If he were too similar, it might be necessary to reject him as threatening. After all, if the reader were forced into a direct confrontation with his own wishes for vengeance, perhaps mixed with sadistic overtones, without considerable personal insight, the suddenly acquired self-awareness might lead to consumer rejec-
tion—a kind of modern “kill the messenger” reaction. Surely, with Holmes and Watson such an eventuality is unthinkable.

Since Holmes and Watson were forced into eternal retirement in 1927, many other detectives have been introduced to the public.

As society changed so did the character of the detective. The weakening of social ties obviated the need for an associate like Watson to provide a kind of Greek chorus reinforcing moral values and offering a popular interpretation of the action. Readers of the hard-boiled American detective story prefer protagonists who work alone, administering justice according to idiosyncratic codes. Focusing on weak areas in the social fabric, they address issues that are related to the public’s dissatisfaction as well.
as their own. As an expression of the modern fantasy, Dashiell Hammett’s Continental Op is an embodiment of the angry individual’s dream; anything can be done without necessarily incurring penalties. The Op is judge, jury, and executioner. In the story “The Golden Horseshoe,” he mercilessly fulfills his destiny when he sends Ed Bohannon to the gallows for a crime he did not commit:

“I can’t put you up for the murders you engineered in San Francisco; but I can sock you with the one you didn’t do in Seattle—so justice won’t be cheated. You’re going to Seattle, Ed, to hang for Ashcraft’s suicide.”

And he did.

Raymond Chandler’s Philip Marlowe in *The High Window* (1942), speaking to two police officers, stands between the establishment and the public: “‘Until you guys own your own souls you don’t own mine. Until you guys can be trusted every time and always, in all times and conditions, to seek the truth out and find it and let the chips fall where they may—until that time comes, I have a right to listen to my conscience, and protect my client the best way I can. Until I’m sure you won’t do him more harm than you’ll do the truth good. Or until I’m hauled before somebody that can make me talk.’” Marlowe’s remarks echo the tenets of the Hippocratic oath and express the basic philosophy of the modern detective. Unlike Holmes, he is uncomfortable with middle-class values, although he never finds a satisfactory alternative to them. He is typified by Ross Macdonald’s Lew Archer in *The Blue Hammer* (1976). Archer is a sensitive isolate unable to retain his objectivity: “There were times when I almost wished I was a priest. I was growing weary of other people’s pain and wondered if a black suit and a white collar might serve as armor against it. I’d never know. My grandmother in Contra Costa County had marked me for the priesthood, but I had slipped away under the fence.” Archer is admirable because he persists in the face of his
weakness.

Yet, none of the detectives created after Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson have ever come close to achieving the kind of distinction earned by these illustrious predecessors. Watson’s uncritical adulation of Holmes’s ratiocinative abilities is echoed by the world’s acceptance of him. In a sense, Sherlock is an embodiment of the mythic hero whose mission is to bring order out of chaos. Among fictional sleuths he and Dr. Watson, his alter ego, continue to occupy their unique place in the hearts and minds of readers everywhere.
Whatever Happened to Ellery Queen?

ANTHONY J. MAZZELLA

Parenthesis and Challenge

[Since] I have often found it a stimulating exercise in my own reading of murder fiction . . . [to try] to determine . . . the identity of the criminal[,] . . . I submit . . . an amiable challenge to the reader[: ] Without reading the concluding pages, Reader—Who Killed Mrs. French? . . . A certain amount of [guessing] is inevitable, . . . but the application of logic and common sense is the important thing, the source of the greater enjoyment. . . .

[from Ch. 36, The French Powder Mystery, 1930]

Ellery sat down at the desk and wrote earnestly on the fly leaf of his sadly abused little book.

[from Ch. 18]

THE statistics are impressive: John M. Reilly's Twentieth Century Crime and Mystery Writers (1980) lists some forty-one novels and omnibuses, all but two featuring Ellery Queen and his father, Inspector Richard Queen; five novels under the pseudonym Barnaby Ross, featuring retired Shakespearean actor Drury Lane; eight short story collections plus six uncollected stories; and nearly 100 other listings for plays, radio scripts, and edited publications. Since then the list has expanded.

The credentials also comprise five Mystery Writers of America Edgars, the top award for mystery fiction, including one for Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine (begun in the fall of 1941 and still continuing), as well as a Grand Master, the highest accolade. In addition, Ellery Queen was awarded the organization's special prize, the Raven. He won the Silver Gertrude for selling a million copies of a single title, and the Golden Gertrude for selling over
five million copies in combined sales. He had his own critical journal, The Queen Canon Bibliophile, renamed the Ellery Queen Review (1968–71); was subject of a full-length study, Royal Bloodline: Ellery Queen, Author and Detective (1974) by Francis M. Nevins, Jr., itself the recipient of an Edgar; and was described as follows by Anthony Boucher, author of the “Criminal at Large” column of The New York Times Book Review in the 50s and 60s: “Ellery Queen is the American Detective Story.” Not bad for someone who did not exist.

"Ellery Queen" was created when two Brooklyn-born cousins decided to enter a mystery-novel contest sponsored by McClure’s magazine in 1928. The first prize was $7,500, and the rules required that an entry be submitted under a pseudonym. Thus, Ellery Queen was born as both author and series detective, the cousins

Frederic Dannay (right) reading an Ellery Queen radio script to his co-author, Manfred Lee, ca. 1942.
believing that readers would remember an author if the name also appeared throughout that author's book. Had the publication not gone bankrupt, the entry would have been awarded first prize. As it was, the Frederick A. Stokes Company published the entry as a book, and with *The Roman Hat Mystery* (1929) the career of Ellery Queen was launched, eventually amassing a reported 120 million readers.

The launchers were Frederic Dannay (1905–1982) and Manfred B. Lee (1905–1971), these names also pseudonyms—of Daniel Nathan and Manford Lepofsky. (Similarly, Anthony Boucher is a pseudonym of William Anthony Parker White. The world of the mystery moves in pseudonymous ways.) The Ellery Queen partnership, as recorded in *Whodunit* (1981) by Stefano Benvenuti and Gianni Rizzoni, was occasionally acrimonious: "Their lives... were spent arguing, so much so that they were sometimes competitors rather than collaborators."

Ellery Queen's adventures arose from casual conversation, newspaper stories, real-life events. One woman's accidental transposition of the initial sounds of words, as in "a blushing crow" for "a crushing blow," according to *Whodunit*, even "inspired a story in which the solution to the mystery lay in reversing the sense of a series of words." Also influencing Queen's career was Philo Vance, created by S. S. Van Dine (yes, a pseudonym, of Willard Huntington Wright), erudite, sophisticated, wealthy, and, as New York District Attorney John F.-X. Markham called him in *The Scarab Murder Case*, a "confounded aesthete." But all his own is the Ellery Queen hallmark: that special mix of complexity, logic, and fair play. In the enthusiastic words of Francis Nevins, the early Ellery Queen books "are richly plotted specimens of the Golden Age deductive puzzle at its zenith, full of bizarre circumstances, conflicting testimony, enigmatic clues, alternative solutions, fireworks displays of virtuoso reasoning and a constant crackle of intellectual excitement." The fictional character who evinced this power of ratiocination was tall, slim, and
athletic, dressed in tweedy elegance, and he ferreted out clues with "devastingly" silver eyes.

For William Kittredge and Steven M. Kauzer in *The Great American Detective* (1978), "No one has done more for the American detective story than Ellery Queen." They cite his contributions as novelist and short-story writer, as anthologist, bibliophile (a massive collection of mystery and detective short stories is housed in the Humanities Research Center, University of Texas at Austin), editor, and radio scriptwriter. (In addition, Dannay's copies of his own novels, inscribed "Ellery Queen/Barnaby Ross" have been deposited in the Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Columbia, a gift of the Dannay family).

Generally agreed to is the division of Queen's detective fiction into four periods, as formulated by Nevins:

(1) 1929-1935: nine novels, all with geographical place names in the titles—from the aforementioned *Roman Hat Mystery* and *French Powder Mystery* to *The Spanish Cape Mystery*—and published at the rate of one or two a year. From the negative clue and dying message to the Iagoesque murderer, patterned clues at the crime, and false solution followed by the right one as Nevins points out—all the distinctive Ellery Queen traits tended to originate in these novels.

(2) 1936-1939: from *Halfway House* to *The Dragon's Teeth*. This was the period of Dannay and Lee's brief foray as screen writers in Hollywood. *Halfway House* marked the end of the geographical place-name titles and may be read as a psychological novel. *The Four of Hearts* and *The Devil to Pay* (both 1938) have a Tinseltown setting, reflecting the cousins' struggles in the film capital.

(3) 1942-1958: following an interim in 1940-41 during which the radio scripts were written for the weekly series *Adventures of Ellery Queen*, this is the longest period, starting with *Calamity Town* and ending with *The Finishing Stroke*, the latter harking back to Ellery Queen's youth in 1929, and the former providing
Whatever Happened to Ellery Queen?

the pseudonymous Ellery Queen with a pseudonym (Ellery Smith), an intricate puzzle, and a love interest.

(4) 1963–1971: although The Finishing Stroke seemed intended to end the series, Ellery Queen returned in a fourth stage, from The Player on the Other Side to A Fine and Private Place. The death of Lee in 1971 marked the end of the series. And a formidable series it is.

And yet...

A recent visit to the Woodbridge Shopping Center in New Jersey in order to make a random check of Waldenbooks and B. Dalton Booksellers, the two largest bookstore chains in the country, revealed not a single Ellery Queen title on the shelves, whereas Agatha Christie, perhaps the champion of the puzzle story, had as many as four shelves devoted to her mystery books. Asked if they could special-order some Ellery Queen titles for me, the bookstore managers stated that their suppliers did not carry the Ellery Queen books, although at least thirty-two titles are currently in print, published by New American Library. A spot check at Doubleday’s on Fifth Avenue at 57th Street in Manhattan similarly revealed that the cupboard was bare. The Mysterious Bookshop on West 56th Street carried but two titles: the 1971 A Fine and Private Place published by Hamlyn, and a Signet Double Mystery—The Killer Touch (1965) and The Devil’s Cook (1966), neither of the latter listed in Twentieth Century Crime and Mystery Writers or in Chris Steinbrunner and Otto Penzler’s Encyclopedia of Mystery and Detection (1976). Ellery Queen’s major literary antecedent, Philo Vance, is meanwhile enjoying a renascence, with more than a half dozen titles placed back in print by Scribner’s and on the bookstore shelves.

Where has Ellery Queen gone? Perhaps an examination of The French Powder Mystery may offer some clues. This is the second Ellery Queen novel. It is set in Manhattan—the major scene of the crime being French’s department store on Fifth Avenue and 39th Street. And it deals with several murders, those of Mrs. Winifred
Anthony J. Mazzella

French and her daughter Bernice Carmody, both of whom were ensnared in the deadly machinations of a notorious drug ring. The novel has an "annotated" cast of characters, a map, and the familiar "Challenge to the Reader" given as the first headnote to this arti-

cle. It also plays scrupulously fair with the reader. And that may be the chief problem. When I worked with this novel in my "Mystery Story" course during a recent semester, every student in class had deduced the identity of the killer, some having done so fairly early in the novel, whereas virtually no one had been as successful with Agatha Christie's classic, *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*. The clues, the action of the novel, the progression of the plot, the details of characterization—all led to one person. Indeed, some students cited merely a single piece of evidence as conclusive, evidence pointedly alluded to in the title. If the revelation at the end of the novel is to prove anticlimactic (the very last words are the name of the killer), then the rest of the novel must consequently be rewarding. Students, however, felt that the novel was padded, a criticism they also leveled at Dorothy Sayers' *Clouds of Witness*. If the denouement isn't startling, and the novel feels padded, perhaps a redeeming feature is its style, much as Raymond Chandler's use of words, described as having a "raw richness of simile seldom seen in a detective yarn" by Will Cuppy in the *Encyclopedia of Mystery and Detection*, helped readers through his convoluted plots, so convoluted that not even Chandler knew who killed

Frederick Dannay signed his own copies of the Ellery Queen books with both of his pseudonyms.
Owen Taylor, the Sternwoods' chauffeur, in *The Big Sleep*.

An analysis of several sections of *The French Powder Mystery* reveals a weakness in style as well. Consider the discovery of the corpse of Mrs. French in the store's window on Fifth Avenue:

What they [the onlookers] saw was a marvel indeed—so unexpected, so horrible, so grotesque that at the instant of its occurrence faces froze into masks of stunned incredulity. It was like a moment snatched out of an unbelievable nightmare. . . . For, as the model pushed the ivory button, a section of the wall slid outward and downward with a swift noiseless movement, two small wooden legs unfolded and shot out of the forepart of the bedstead, the bed settled to a horizontal position—and the body of a woman, pale-faced, crumpled, distorted, her clothes bloody in two places, fell from the silken sheet to the floor at the model's feet.

The unexpected setting for the murder is a brilliant stroke, but the adjectives in triplicate vitiate the excitement: "unexpected," "horrible," "grotesque"; "two," "small," "wooden"; "pale-faced," "crumpled," "distorted." The clichés, "unbelievable nightmare," "faces froze into masks," detract as well.

Similarly, the following passage, describing the response to Inspector Queen's questioning of a suspect, is overwrought:

There was a naked silence in the room—a raw pulsing quiet that beat invisible against the atmosphere. Ellery heard quick breaths drawn, saw bodies tense, eyes sharpen, hand twitch as, to a man, the occupants of the room with the exception of Cyrus French leaned forward, watching Marion French as she stood there, facing them.

Equally melodramatic is the following brief passage: "The maid lifted the lid from the third box [containing hats]. She uttered a little choked cry and reeled backward, touching Ellery. The contact seemed to burn her skin. She jumped away, fumbled for a handkerchief." Choking, reeling, burning, fumbling seem excessive actions to accompany the sight of Bernice Carmody's hat.

Also excessive are the italicized passages. For example, in Chap-
Dust jacket of the World Book edition of the second Ellery Queen novel.
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Ellery Queen, discussing with his father Bernice's disappearance, asks, "'But was she in the store?'" and answers that she "was not..." He notes that while she always smoked her cigarettes part way through those found were smoked completely without exception, that "'Somebody wanted her key badly enough to risk a call and a messenger,'" his father adding that "'She was a drug fiend'" and that if they should nab the drug ringleaders that would be a valuable achievement.

Similarly disturbing for a contemporary audience may be *The Roman Hat Mystery*. In this novel about the murder of a noisome blackmailer in the middle of a performance at the Roman Theatre in New York, a novel dominated by Inspector Queen, who is endearing but comes across as doddering, the murderer's history is described at the climax of the novel as "a sordid story... to make it short and ugly, [the killer] has a strain of negroid blood in his veins."

*The Greek Coffin Mystery*, another early novel and the first Ellery Queen adventure chronologically, has acrostic chapter titles and suffers from similar difficulties. In this novel about the repercussions attendant upon the death in New York of a Greek art dealer, Georg Khalkis, there are four solutions to the mystery, each more startling than the one before but each contributing to the novel's long-windedness. It takes two pages, for example, to explain a rather obvious clue. Furthermore, it's not the least likely person who finally turns out to be guilty; it's the most unlikely person. The correct solution following the misleading, incorrect solutions, strains credulity. Moreover, there are the usual stylistic concerns, as well as some new problems. There is the triplicate terminology: "They gaped at him [Assistant District Attorney Pepper]: a stupefaction of indecision, of mystery, of bewilderment had crept over them." There is the infelicitous phrase: "[Detective Sergeant Thomas] Yelie swung a horny finger at Woodruff [Khalkis's attorney]." And there is a note of sexism: When the "broad and ample police matron" (not named, unlike her
male counterparts) is given a line of dialogue, she first "trudged back with a laconic grunt of negation; then: "'The fat dame upstairs—housekeeper?—she's okay too,' said the matron."

But if you consider Ten Days' Wonder (1948), a novel from the third period, you get a glimpse of what all the excitement was about: though 224 pages in the current Signet Double Mystery edition, it seems lean and spare. It has enough enigmatic clues to satisfy the most tireless searcher. Its characters—from powerful Diedrich Van Horn and his officious brother Wolfert to the doomed Phaedra-Hippolytus lovers—are psychologically compelling and genuinely interesting. Its double solution, startling. Its Decalogue construction, ingenious and yet not strained. Its logic nearly impeccable (the Pygmalion reversal isn't entirely satisfactory, but that is a minor cavil). Ellery Queen dominates this parable of intellectual hubris—his own—to good effect. And the book's style is free from the mannerisms of the early novels. There is even a Chandleresque simile: "... someone had turned the lights on in the guest house and it poked fingers into the garden like a woman exploring her hair."

Perhaps inadvertently then, the combination of scruples and style, of playing too fair and saying too much, led to Ellery Queen's untimely demise on the popular bookstore shelves. Also, the prized Queen logic may be lost in a terrorist age. The second headnote, then, takes on the aura of a kind of prescient epitaph. It may also contain, however, the promise of a resurrection.

Addendum: The promise may already be partly fulfilled. A recent return visit to the Mysterious Bookshop led to the discovery of twenty-four titles on the shelves, including The Greek Coffin Mystery, The Roman Hat Mystery, and Ten Days' Wonder.
Our Growing Collections
KENNETH A. LOHF

Chrystie gift. Mr. Thomas L. Chrystie (A.B., 1955) has presented a notable group of Chrystie family portraits and a collection of papers relating to the family. The six oil paintings, executed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, include portraits of: Major James Chrystie, the forebear of the prominent New York Chrystie family which was to be closely associated with the University; Colonel John Chrystie, a member of the College Class of 1806 who was killed in the War of 1812; Thomas Witter Chrystie (1808–1888), a member of the Class of 1828; the Reverend James Chrystie (1786–1863), son of Major James Chrystie and father of Thomas Witter, James, and John Chrystie, all of whom graduated from the College; Thomas Witter (1713–1786), grandfather of the Reverend James Chrystie; and Thomas Mackaness (1736–1807), forebear of Thomas Mackaness Ludlow Chrystie who was in the Class of 1867. The approximately 150 letters, manuscripts, documents, and memorabilia comprising the family papers include correspondence of many of the above, as well as letters and documents of John Adams, Nicholas Murray Butler, Benjamin N. Cardozo, Thomas E. Dewey, David Glasgow Farragut, Seth Low, and James Monroe, among others. There are also files of photographs pertaining to the family and its associations with the University, thirty volumes from the libraries of various members of the family, framed etchings and engravings of views of the University, and the copy of The Book of Common Prayer, London, 1760, containing genealogical records of the Ludlow and the Chrystie families.

Durgin gift. Mrs. James H. Durgin has donated a copy of the handsomely illustrated 1827 edition of Journey from Riga to the Crimea, with Some Account of the Manners and Customs of the
Colonists of New Russia, written by the noted early nineteenth century travel writer Mary Holderness.

Faatz gift. Dr. Anita J. Faatz has presented three important items for addition to the Otto Rank Collection: the framed pastel portrait of Dr. Jessie Taft, Rank's biographer and the donor of the Rank Papers, drawn by Catharine Grant; and first editions of Rank's Art and Artist, 1932, and The Trauma of Birth, 1929, warmly inscribed by Rank to Dr. Taft.

Feinberg gift. Mr. Charles E. Feinberg has donated the following Walt Whitman items: an original wood-engraving of a Whitman portrait by William James Linton, 1871, framed with a proof of the title page of the 1876 edition of Leaves of Grass; and a framed 1860 engraved frontispiece portrait from the third edition of Leaves of Grass.

Galpin gift. Mrs. Isabella P. Galpin has added to the papers of her late husband, Professor Alfred M. Galpin, the pen and ink portrait of him drawn by his friend Samuel Loveman on July 22, 1922.
Measuring approximately 12 by 6 inches, the drawing is signed, dated, and inscribed by the artist to Professor Galpin.

*Gitlin gift.* Mr. Paul Gitlin has presented, for addition to the Melville Cane Papers, a group of twenty-three issues of periodicals containing contributions by and about the poet, a framed tribute to Mr. Cane from the directors of Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich on the occasion of his one hundredth birthday, and the typewritten manuscripts of two poems by Hiram Haydn, “Athwart, We Beg You,” 1969, and “Presence of Cane,” 1971, signed by the poet and members of the publishing firm.

*Halsband gift.* Professor Robert Halsband (A.M., 1936) has presented three impressive pen drawings by John Kettelwell for the edition of Sir Richard Burton’s translation of *The Kasidah of Haji Addu el-Yezdi*, published in London in 1925 by Philip Allan. Two of the drawings, titled “When swift the Camel-rider spans” and “There is no Good, there is no Bad,” appeared in the volume, and the third is a version of the former and not published in the book. Accompanying the gift is a first edition of *The Kasidah*, inscribed by the artist at the time of publication.

*Haywood gift.* Professor Charles Haywood (Ph.D., 1949) has presented a fine group of first editions and illustrated books, among which are: Alexander Blok, *The Twelve*, New York, 1931, one of one hundred numbered copies with original lithographs by George Biddle; James Joyce, *Anna Livia Plurabelle*, New York, 1928, one of eight hundred copies signed by the author; William Little, *The Easy Instructor*, Albany, 1798; Rudolph Lothar, *Das Wiener Burgtheater*, Vienna, 1934, one of one hundred copies signed by all the members of the Burgtheater; Ezra Pound, *Provença*, Boston, 1910; and E.G. Squier, *The Serpent Symbol*, New York, 1851, with an autograph letter from the author to John C.B. Davis, presenting the volume. Also donated by Professor Haywood is a group of autograph letters and manuscripts, primarily German and dating from the seventeenth cen-
tury through the nineteenth centuries, which includes a drama by Wilhelm Von Spazy, 1827.


Hotelling gift. The papers of the late Professor Harold Hotelling, mathematical statistician and economist, have been received as a gift from Mrs. Hotelling. Professor Hotelling taught at Columbia from 1931 until he left in 1946 to establish the statistics department at the University of North Carolina. During World War II he did research in Columbia’s Statistical Research Group, and he was later involved with research for the Office of Naval Research at Chapel Hill. The papers include correspondence with colleagues and materials relating to the various universities, professional associations, and other institutions with which he was affiliated. There are also teaching materials, research notes, and drafts of articles and books, including those for his important work *The Teaching of Statistics*. The files of correspondence with colleagues and economists include letters from Alfred Cowles, 3rd, Milton Friedman, Ragnar Frisch, Helen Walker, Warren Weaver, and Samuel S. Wilks.

Kruger gift. Mrs. Linda Kruger (M.S., 1965; D.L.S., 1980) has added to the collections a children’s card game, entitled “Star Authors,” published in 1888 by McLoughlin Brothers of New York, and a group of 68 pieces of sheet music, dating from the
late nineteenth century to 1920, and including such popular songs as “Silver Threads Among the Gold,” “Dear Old Pal of Mine,” and “It's a Long, Long Way to Tipperary.”

Original pen drawing by John Kettlewell for Richard Burton's translation of The Kasidah. (Halsband gift)

Lengyel gift. A collection of the papers of the noted journalist and scholar, the late Professor Emil Lengyel, has been established by his widow, Mrs. Livia Lengyel, with the recent gift of more than one thousand of his manuscripts and correspondence. Born in Hungary, Professor Lengyel came to the United States in 1922,
and was the author of more than forty books on the politics of Europe and Asia, most notably the European theater of World War II and the rise of Nazism. The papers presented by Mrs. Lengyel include scrapbooks of clippings of Professor Lengyel's articles, manuscripts of several of his historical works, outlines for books and screenplays, and drafts of autobiographical writings. The correspondence file contains letters from numerous writers and public figures, among them, John Dos Passos, Theodore Dreiser, Count and Countess Karolyi, Robert F. Kennedy, Fiorello La Guardia, Thomas Mann, H. L. Mencken, and Ferenc Molnar.

*Miller gift.* Mrs. Carolyn R. Miller (B.S., 1931) has presented the copy of *The Book of Common Prayer*, London, 1850, which had been owned by her father, the Reverend Daniel Russell, who was for many years the minister of Rutgers Presbyterian Church in New York City. Bound in full crimson morocco, the book, printed and engraved by Vizetelly Brothers, has chromolithographed illuminations and illustrations throughout, and has an attractive fore-edge painting of the Last Supper.

*Myers gift.* In memory of James Gilvarry, Professor Andrew B. Myers (A.M., 1947; Ph.D., 1964) has presented a group of autograph letters and association copies of books by Irish authors, including: six autograph letters written by Lord Dunsany to Thomas Brown Rudmose-Brown and others, dated 1910–1946, a signed photograph of Lord Dunsany, and a first edition of the author’s *The Old Folk of the Centuries*, 1930; inscribed first editions of Liam O’Flaherty’s *The Assassin*, 1928, *The Black Soul*, 1924, and *Spring Sowing*, 1924; and first editions of James Stephens’s *The Insurrection in Dublin*, 1916, and *Theme and Variations*, 1930, each autographed by the author.

*Parsons gift.* The resources in Scottish literature and history have been considerably strengthened by the recent gift from Professor Coleman O. Parsons (A.B., 1928) of 368 titles in 427 volumes,
Our Growing Collections

ranging in date from the mid-seventeenth century to the 1980s. The volumes in the gift represent first editions, significant reprints, and illustrated editions of the writing of numerous authors, including Joanna Baillie, J.M. Barrie, Thomas Bewick, John Buchan, George Crabbe, R.B. Cunninghame Graham, Daniel Defoe, James Hogg, John Home, Andrew Lang, Hugh Macdiarmid, and Robert Louis Stevenson. Among the earliest volumes are a first edition of *Eikon Basilike: The Pourtraicture of His Sacred Maiestie in His Solitudes and Sufferings*, London, 1648, and a copy in contemporary calf of the first edition in English of George Buchanan’s *The History of Scotland*, printed in London in 1690.

**Propper de Callejon gift.** Mr. Felipe Propper de Callejon has presented the collection of books relating to the First World War and World War II which were collected by his father, Ambassador Eduardo Propper de Callejon, the Spanish diplomat who served as Ambassador to France and the United States in the 1930s and 1940s. The subjects covered by the more than two hundred volumes in the collection are the events of the Wars and the political movements surrounding them, military intelligence, and memoirs of the principal figures of the times. There are notable books by numerous public figures and authors, among them, Georges Clemenceau, Maréchal Foch, Alexander Kerensky, Vladimir Lenin, Carlo Sforza, Jules Romains, Léon Blum, Charles de Gaulle, Jean Giraudoux, Jacques Maritain, Leon Trotsky, and Winston S. Churchill.

**Rapoport gift.** Thirty-four illustrated books, primarily French, have been presented by Dr. Kenneth D. Rapoport (A.B., 1958) for addition to the Book Arts Collection. Of special importance is the limited edition on Holland paper of Anatole France’s *L’Ile des Pingouins*, published in Paris in 1926, and illustrated by the designer and artist Louis Jou with twenty full-page etchings and 131 smaller illustrations in color throughout the text; the folio is handsomely bound by Lavaux in full blue morocco with inlaid
figures of penguins on the covers and spine. Other authors and artists represented in Dr. Rapoport’s gift include Georges Duhamel, Paul Eluard, André Maurois, Henry Moore, Pablo Picasso, Georges Rouault, and Philippe Soupault, among others. There is also a fine copy of *The Earth Fiend*, a ballad written and illustrated by the painter and etcher William Strang, and published by Elkin Mathews and John Lane in London in 1892; one of 150 copies signed by the author, the work contains some of the best of Strang’s earlier etchings.
Our Growing Collections

Ray gift. The volume containing William Blake’s only wood engravings, Robert John Thornton’s school text edition of The Pastorals of Virgil, published in London in 1821, has been presented by Mr. Gordon N. Ray (LL.D., 1969). Designed and engraved by Blake as illustrations to the first eclogue, the remarkable series of seventeen woodcuts comprises four groups of four cuts, each on a full page, and a larger frontispiece. Because the illustrations marked a departure from the ordinary methods of the wood-engraver of the period, Thornton felt it necessary to apologise in the volume for their bold style by stating that “they display less of art than genius, and are much admired by some eminent painters”; influencing the work of later artists, notably Samuel Palmer and Edward Calvert, they are today widely recognized for their extraordinary merit, and the volume is a most welcome addition to the Book Arts Collection.
Seixas gift. Dr. Frank A. Seixas (A.M., 1945; M.D., 1951) has presented the printed eulogy that was delivered by Naphtali Phillips at the funeral of his ancestor, the Reverend Gershom Mendes Seixas (1746–1816), the first native-born American rabbi, the first rabbi of Congregation Shearith Israel in New York City, and the acknowledged spokesman for American Jewry during his fifty-year ministry. The eulogy was delivered at the Synagogue by the President of the Congregation on July 13, 1816, and was subsequently printed by J.H. Sherman at No. 10 Broad-street. The rare and fragile pamphlet has special importance for the University as Reverend Seixas served as regent and charter trustee of Columbia College from 1784 until 1815.

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