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Photography by Martin Messik

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My subject is War, and the pity of War. The Poetry is in the pity.

1914 + 1918

RICHARD ALDINGTON
LAURENCE BINYON
EDMUND BLUNDEN
RUPERT BROOKE
WILFRID GIBSON
ROBERT GRAVES
JULIAN GRENFELL
IVOR GURNEY
DAVID JONES
ROBERT NICHOLS
WILFRED OWEN
HERBERT READ
ISAAC ROSENBERG
SIEGFRIED SASSOON
CHARLES SORLEY
EDWARD THOMAS
Edmund Blunden’s Memories of War

CAROL Z. ROTHKOPF

In the Poets’ Corner at Westminster Abbey there is a memorial to the sixteen British soldier poets whose works have perhaps been the single greatest influence shaping our perceptions of the Great War, 1914–1918. One of these poets, Edmund Blunden, writing years later in War Poets 1914–1918, singled out only a few, notably Rupert Brooke, Siegfried Sassoon, and Wilfred Owen, “from all degrees and ranks of versemen” as “dynamic” and completely worthy of our attention. Blunden took self-effacement even further in his chapter on Sassoon, in which he dismissed himself as a mere “verse-writer” who by the end of 1916 “was almost a poet of the shell-holes, of ruin and of mortification.”

The word “almost” is a clue to Blunden’s modest assessment of his own poetic gift. Clearly, the authorities—the many literary historians as well as the editors of the countless anthologies of war poetry who included Blunden among the poets to be honored in the War memorial—disagreed. Nevertheless, Blunden is still far less well known today than some of his contemporaries and seems to be passing through one of those eclipses that sometimes envelop the most distinguished writers in temporary obscurity.

As a student of literary history, Blunden would surely understand that his current semivisible status in the world of letters is likely to be transitory, a vagary of the clash between the experimentalism of other twentieth-century writers and his own profound traditionalism. Not for Blunden the tinkering with language and verse forms and dissonance that made some of his contemporaries famous. Instead he chose the older, familiar forms that had served so many

Opposite: The memorial to the British soldier poets of the First World War, in Poets’ Corner in Westminster Abbey, unveiled on November 11, 1985, honors sixteen poets including Edmund Blunden.
generations of poets so well. This traditionalism of Blunden’s was combined with a reverence for nature that was both quintessentially British and part of an unbroken chain of poetry extending back at least as far as Vergil’s Georgics.

Blunden in 1961 on his sixty-fifth birthday

Blunden’s intense feeling for the past was apparently obvious to everyone who knew him. In fact, editor and publisher Sir Rupert Hart-Davis said that when they first met he was struck by the aptness of Robert Graves’s description of Blunden as looking like “a cross between Julius Caesar and a bird.” Hart-Davis went on to note that Blunden’s “... tiny frame, his shyness, his quick-darting eyes and gestures, had all the grace and agility of a wren, while his noble
nose suggested the dominance of the Latin poets he read and loved.’

In a collection of tributes prepared for his sixty-fifth birthday, Blunden’s wife, Claire, observed that one could almost see memory tug Blunden back in time:

Some hours and days are replayed to him over and over again by their association with special dates and kinds of weather, and those close to him know in particular the force of the First World War and its anniversaries in this respect. There seem to be hours when the effort of being in the present is simply a courtesy to his friends and family and his puzzle is how to take us back to ‘then’. . .

‘Then’ began in London on November 1, 1896, when Edmund Charles was born, the first of Charles Edmund and Georgina Blunden’s nine children. Blunden’s parents were schoolteachers, a path that Blunden himself followed during extended periods as a fellow at Oxford, a professor at Tokyo Imperial University and later at Hong Kong, and, in 1968, professor of poetry at Oxford, the chair once occupied by Matthew Arnold.

But all that was still far ahead when the Blundens moved their growing family from London to Yalding, Kent, where their eldest son attended grammar school before going off to Christ’s Hospital in West Horsham. Among the distinguished ‘Blues’—students—of the previous century, three in particular captured Blunden’s imagination and later inspired some of his best biographical and critical writing. They were Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Charles Lamb, and Leigh Hunt. The school became the subject of a generally light-hearted history by Blunden, who near the end almost apologetically introduces the too-swift passage he and others made from school to the war:

Let me here remember, what I can never forget, the luck which brought five Old Blues together as officers of one company of the Royal Sussex. We might have been on holiday together, so hearty was the brotherhood, so ready with wit and humour, until on July 31st, 1917, all five went over the top at the opening of the ill-starred Passchendaele offensive, when two never returned. Tice and Collyer, soundest of men.

This painfully understated account of so terrible and personal a loss is different than the anger and pain that Blunden allowed him-
self to express to a younger Blue, A. H. Buck, in letters that are now in the Bodleian Library, Oxford. In June 1917 Blunden wrote Buck, "The war is a sort of slow poison to me that keeps on dragging and deadening my mind. . . . Anyway I loathe war and the army too. To hell with same. . . ." Blunden does not disguise his anger at the "shriek" that follows a few hundred civilian casualties in a bombing raid on England, when over several hundred thousand have died in battle. He strove to balance such views with an account of the most read books at the front, Flossie and Aphrodite, of which he is sure the Archbishop of Canterbury would not approve. But the mood is hard to sustain, and a month before the horror of Passchendaele he wrote Buck again, saying, "Please get the War stopped pretty soon. Some of us are as mummies, only we still carry on the motions of breathing, swathed round with red tape—monotony."

There is a kind of innocent hopefulness in these words that reflects Blunden's youthfulness (which earned him such nicknames as "Rabbit" and "Bunny") and belies his already mature literary gift, evidenced by the publication of seven volumes of poetry between 1914 and 1917, and his earnest efforts to convert some of his brother soldiers to his literary convictions. By his own account to Buck, for example, he never went anywhere without a copy of John Clare's poems, "... often tub-thumping over them, claiming him as one of the best. But no one wants to agree with me." All this as he witnessed the decimation of his 11th Battalion of the Royal Sussex Regiments over a period of two years at La Bassée, Hamel, Thiepval, and Ypres-Passchendaele; survived being gassed; and was awarded the Military Cross.

For a man of Blunden's disposition the only way to mesh all that he knew from books and what he had witnessed in the war was to write. Some of his most memorable poetry was written during the war years. In De Bello Germanico, which he began during the war, Blunden made his first attempt to describe in prose what he had seen. The result is a short, straightforward, almost boyish account of the transformation of a raw recruit into a veteran of trench education.
A group of officers with Edmund Blunden, bottom right, ca. 1917
It was while he was teaching in Japan during the late 1920s that Blunden returned to this material, writing in the preface of *Undertones of War*, “I must go over the ground again....” and then, almost as if talking to himself, “You will be going over the ground again... until the hour when agony’s clawed face softens into the smilingness of a young spring day.”

*Undertones of War* (1928), from its title onward, has the superficial appearance of an autobiography that is strangely detached from its ghastly subject matter, is even Arcadian in spirit, or, in Paul Fussell’s words, resembles “an extended pastoral elegy.” Blunden distanced himself from the horrors he described, as the only way he could manage to impose some kind of order on what was after all a portrait of Chaos. One does not have to read far to sense the gulf between the surface calm of the words and the deadly events they describe. The conventions of Arcadia serve to make the writer-soldier’s youth all the more painful to read about, even at the end of the book, when, about to leave, he describes himself as “a harmless young shepherd in a soldier’s coat” who had seen much but still did
not realize that "the tranquilized valley" he was leaving behind was to be the next battle site.

The more than thirty poems that Blunden placed at the end of the text as "A Supplement of Poetical Interpretations and Variations" leave no doubt, however, that the war had found in Blunden one of its most subtle and mature spokesmen. For example, "Vlamertinghe: Passing the Chateau, July 1917" begins with a quotation from Keats's "Ode on a Grecian Urn"—"And all her silken flanks with garlands drest"—inevitably recalling to mind the opening of that stanza, "Who are these coming to the sacrifice?" Irony is heaped on irony as the poet goes on to describe

Bold great daisies' golden lights
Bubbling roses' pinks and whites—
Such a gay carpet! poppies by the million!
Such damask! Such vermilion!
But if you ask me, mate, the choice of colour
Is scarcely right; this red should have been duller.

The collection of letters in the Rare Book and Manuscript Library is only one testament to his tireless efforts as an author as well as on behalf of the Great War writers. In the course of a career that led to the publication of over 175 books and pamphlets and a staggering 3,663 contributions to books, pamphlets, periodicals, and newspapers, Blunden never forgot that he was a survivor, and he accepted the obligation of being a witness and spokesman because, as he said near the end of his life, in 1974, he was "haunted." It is scarcely a surprise, then, to find his name on the title page of so many books about the war: as a compiler of The War 1914-1918: A Booklist and as the author of the introductions to Great Short Stories of the War, An Anthology of War Poems, and, with scarcely disguised emotion, both The Poems of Wilfred Owen and Poems by Ivor Gurney—whose names are, of course, on the memorial with Blunden's. In addition, he served as Honorary Literary Adviser to the Imperial War Graves Commission and, when World War II began, accepted a post as an instructor in map reading to soldiers at Oxford.
In view of Blunden's importance as a teacher, critic, essayist, editor, and, above all, a writer about the Great War, it is curious to have to seek him out in his present literary limbo. Since he himself tirelessly worked at reviving the reputations of writers he thought were being unjustly neglected by his generation—among them James Thomson, William Collins, Christopher Smart, Henry Vaughan, and, of course, John Clare—it is likely that Blunden would take the long view of his own case, much as he did that of the seventeenth-century poet Vaughan:

Wherever the question of the survival of the best in poetry without the assistance of biographers and popularisers is being debated, the instance of... Vaughan should not be left out. His present fame is one of the best practical arguments for the belief that the good thing is strong enough to pass through all the obstacles and shadows of a period into a permanent and conspicuous renown.
My Life as a Literary Agent

JAMES OLIVER BROWN

Literary agents were in my day, in the world in which we operated, considered to be rather second-class citizens, not by the authors we represented but by people in that world. It was said about us that we just sat back and took our ten percent, or, in the case of some agents, fifteen percent, of the authors' receipts, creating nothing, just second-class citizens. In Hollywood, a party that included an agent as a guest was considered an event near the bottom of the social scale. On the East coast, agents were more socially accepted in the publishing world, although we remained just ten-percenter.

From novels and stories and films, one had a picture of a female agent as a rather stout, dowdy, aggressive lady wearing a hat in the office, and of a male agent as a rather stout, aggressive, cigar-smoking boor. Neither picture was true. We agents came in all sizes and shapes and from all backgrounds. I know of no such agents with hats and cigars.

When one becomes an agent, one usually becomes addicted to the profession. It is the same thing, with different results, as alcoholism. The agent (at least this agent) takes on the problems of the authors he or she represents, not just the writing problems but the financial, sexual, marital, living problems. It is a treadmill of involvement, an addiction from which there is no escape except by retirement or death.

My relationship with Herbert Gold, a graduate of Columbia and author of more than twenty books, for most of which I was the agent, I think, is indicative of the unique relationships between writer and agent. Herb lives in San Francisco, where I have visited him on numerous occasions. His first divorce was a source of great distress to him and to me and to the various magazine editors who tired of the subject of divorce from him in too many articles and stories. He promised me that he would not consider marrying again
without driving out into the desert to ruminate, and would not get married without my approval of his next prospective wife. That approval was assured when I met Melissa Dilworth on a visit to San Francisco. An agent/author relationship is quite different from most lawyer/client relationships.

Most authors have agents. Some authors depend on lawyers in working out individual deals, but most feel the need of an agent as a partner in life. The agent knows all of the author’s work, is the first to read and comment, fights for the author’s rights, negotiates the terms of the contract, listens when no one else will.
Most good agents do a certain amount of editorial work with their clients' writing. I tried to avoid that function as much as possible, both for the lack of time and because of my feeling that it was the editor's and not my job. But I did a lot of it over the years, and I was good at it, having been trained as the New York editor of the Boston publisher Little, Brown & Co.

Incidentally, although I started my publishing career with Little, Brown and was subsequently president of James Brown Associates, on the board of Curtis Brown, London, and — after the London and New York Curtis Browns were reunited — president of Curtis Brown Associates in New York, the only one of all those Browns that I was related to was myself as president of James Brown Associates and Curtis Brown Associates.

In the July 1967 issue of The Writer, I defined the functions of the literary agent in these words:

The literary agent performs a complex and varied function, which can't be too well defined. His function depends upon the kinds of writers he represents. I can speak only for my own operation. I'm a business manager-adviser, coordinator, protector of rights, exploiter of all rights to all writings of the writers I represent, such rights including book, magazine, dramatic, motion picture, radio, television, recording, translation. My important function as an agent is bringing in money for the writer, getting the most money possible in the interests of the writer, from every possible source. When an agent starts to work on a piece of writing, a story, an article, a book, whatever, he thinks of it in terms of all rights and gets it to the people who buy rights, here and abroad. He is an expert in knowing the markets and having the organization to get to them.

I began as an agent in 1948. I had resigned as New York editor of Little, Brown that April and was at our country place in Washington Depot, Connecticut, when I had a telephone call from my friends Archie Ogden, the eastern story editor for Twentieth-Century Fox, and Stuart Rose, senior editor of The Saturday Evening Post, who were having their before-lunch martinis in George's little downstairs bar in the Ritz, at 47th and Madison. Archie and Stuart suggested that, since I was doing nothing, I ought to meet the widow of a recently deceased literary agent and advise her how to
proceed with the very lucrative business he had left. My response was, “But I don’t want to be a literary agent.” “No, that’s not the idea. You’re not doing anything up there, just meet her and try to help her.” Famous last words! I met Marde Sanders at lunch and became a literary agent.

In 1949, my now long-time Swiss friend René de Chochor and I started our literary agency, James Brown Associates, at 17 East 49th Street. In the beginning the agency was called just James Oliver Brown because of the American difficulty with René’s last name. I had left the Sanders agency, having helped Marde on her way. I was hooked.

In 1948, and for more than a decade after, the operations of the leading literary agents were quiet and low-key. We thought about money or our authors, of course, but our first interest was in good writing.

As early as 1968, the world of the literary agent was changing. In that year the two agents most known for their lists of authors were Candida Donadio and I. Photographs of Candida and me were centered on a page of *Time* magazine for March 8, 1968. On either side of our photographs were the photographs of the agents Sterling Lord and Scott Meredith. I was quoted in *Time* as saying, “A man like Scott Meredith has hurt the industry by pressing for unrealistic advances in terms of what he is offering.” I applaud the agent Bob Lescher, quoted in the same article as saying, “I’m in the business of handling creative careers. I don’t want a publisher turning sour on a writer because I negotiated too big an advance.” On the other hand, Sterling Lord said, “The money is there. The great crime, if you control rights, is not to exploit them.”

Scott Meredith and Sterling Lord have won out. The publishing industry has changed. The large advances and auctions, now the practice of all agents, have replaced the way I operated as an agent. I think that all of the agents have had a great deal to do with the unhappy state of affairs in the publishing business today. They have contributed, and to a large degree, I think, to the regrettable demise of publishers such as Scribner’s and, most recently, Crown through
absorption into a handful of corporations that can afford the big-buck advances and that control almost fifty percent of an industry that in my day was made up of possibly dozens of independent family-run businesses.

As a result, since giant conglomerates need unprecedented sales to pay for these megadollar mergers, writing suffers. A lot of what in my day would have been considered trash is being published. The novel that does not have large money possibilities is now usually being passed over by agents and publishers as "borderline," and, as such, unpublishable.

I retired in 1985. I had a distinguished and demanding list of clients—people I liked whose work I liked. To represent someone I did not care for, both as person and writer, was not for me. One
does not get rich being a literary agent, but one is poorer when being as selective as I was.

Of course, I had commercial successes. I represented Louis Auchincloss, a superb talent; Erskine Caldwell; Herbert Gold, with his unique style in both fiction and nonfiction, published in books and in magazines. I represented Joseph Hayes, beginning with his first novel, *The Desperate Hours*, an early success in my career, as was Mac Hyman with his first novel, *No Time for Sergeants*; Lonnie Coleman and his financially successful *Beulah Land* novels; and, among others, Katherine Anne Porter, Jean Stafford, Richard Lockridge, C. Wright Mills, Jerzy Kosinsky, Alberto Moravia, A. J. Liebling, and Howard Moss. My last big commercial success, just before I retired, was Dominick Dunne’s *The Two Mrs. Grenvilles*. His recent bestseller is *People Like Us*.

Until his recent untimely death, Howard Moss was poetry editor on *The New Yorker* for many years. I handled the contract for his first book of poems with Scribner’s. The advance paid was probably a hundred dollars or a little more. I told Howard that my taking ten percent of this amount was not in his interest, and that representing him for this book was also a financial loss for me. We remained friends, and I was available to tell him, without charge, of any developments in Scribner’s contracts that he should watch. I did get an enormous five-hundred-dollar advance from Macmillan against royalties for Howard’s *The Magic Lantern of Marcel Proust*, one of the best about the French novelist.

I met Louis Auchincloss in 1937, long before his first book was published and long before I had any idea of being in publishing. My relationship with Louis has been a happy one all this time, and from 1948 to 1985 it has been a most happy and profitable business relationship as well.

My relationship with Erskine Caldwell, author of *Tobacco Road* and *God’s Little Acre*, among many other works, resulted in my taking business trips to England, France, Italy, and the Scandinavian countries, both with and without Erskine. Just before his death in 1987 he published an autobiography in which he said that he and I
had stayed at Brown's Hotel in London. I have never stayed at Brown's, but Erskine's recollection of our relationship is full of flattering misinformation. Our relationship was close and pleasant and very demanding. He, in his day, was probably more published around the world, including behind the Iron Curtain, than any other then-living author, and that meant a lot of contracts and a lot of work for his agent.

In Europe, the social standing of the American literary agent in the publishing business was also pretty second-rate. I remember being with Erskine Caldwell in Milan in the early 1950s and being told that Count Bompiani, his publisher, and the Countess could not invite me to dinner at their house; they had thought Erskine would be traveling with his wife, and there was not room at the table for an extra man!

My experience with the Gallimards in Paris was different from that with the Bompianis in Milan. The Gallimards have been publishing the most important books in France for years. I had a most enjoyable lunch with Gaston Gallimard and his wife and family, a lunch for Erskine, at their house. Gaston Gallimard loathed the idea of an agent interfering in his relationship with an author. In spite of that, he treated me as if I were a gentleman, not an unnecessary, obnoxious agent.

I had a marvelously loyal, close, and friendly following with most of the people I represented, but I had bad luck with two of the women. Madame Perkins, Franklin Roosevelt's secretary of labor, took me to tea at her club, the Cosmopolitan, to discuss the contract for her biography of Al Smith. I heard nothing further from the lady, but some months later I read in a newspaper about the publication of her Al Smith biography. She had listened to my advice and used it to negotiate her contract with Little, Brown on her own.

The other experience was with an author I liked immensely, the distinguished and superb writer Katherine Anne Porter. I learned later that she had left me just before she negotiated her own contract for her very successful Ship of Fools. A real estate operator
friend of mine had asked Katherine Anne, when she was renting or buying a place to live, whether she had an agent. She told him that she did not.

Jean Stafford won my heart from the very beginning of our relationship by knowing, from her experience as the wife of the proper Bostonian poet Robert Lowell, how to make and pour afternoon tea, a plus with me. I have my tea at four o’clock almost every day. Jean had few, if any, lasting relationships, and I am happy to say that she and I worked together for nineteen years before she left me. David Roberts’s shocking and much discussed biography of her was published in August 1988.
In the 1950s and 1960s I was active in the theater, representing the plays of Louis Auchincloss, Joseph Hayes, Lonnie Coleman, and others. I handled the negotiations with Ira Levin for his excellent dramatization of Mac Hyman’s *No Time for Sergeants*. After I abandoned handling plays, I found that I could not enjoy any theater production, because all I could think about was the dishonesty and deviousness of most people connected with it—I would think about the lighting, the sets, and the fights with producers and directors. I came to hate the theater, so much so that I do not go to any plays now if I can help it.

On the other hand, I had some fun in the theater. I remember the day Andy Griffith came into my office. Andy was then appearing with his guitar at clubs, and he wanted to adapt some of *No Time for Sergeants* to his use. As we were at that time negotiating to sell television, play, and film rights to the Mac Hyman novel, we could not cloud the title to the performance rights by letting Andy have what he wanted. But when Andy arrived that day, my receptionist announced to me on the phone that Will Stockdale—the protagonist in the novel—was there. She did this without thinking. I immediately called the Theatre Guild to tell them that I had found Will Stockdale. Andy Griffith began his brilliant film career playing the role.

I remember taking my eleven-year-old son with me in 1959 to Philadelphia, where a play by my client Lonnie Coleman, starring Eartha Kitt, was opening. My son had never met any of his Philadelphia relatives, and I was taking this opportunity to introduce him to a cousin. I happened to be in a hurry, walking alone on Broad Street, when a little boy came up to me to say hello. I met his approach, rudely and irrationally, with, “Sorry, I have a little boy.” Too late, after hurrying on my way, I realized that the “little boy” was Truman Capote, whom I had known since publication of his first book and who was now in his mid-thirties. It turned out that Truman was in Philadelphia with a one-time client of mine, Cecil Beaton, with the rehearsal of (if I remember correctly) *My Fair Lady*. Truman never spoke to me again.
In addition to my rather numerous trips to Europe, I did a lot of traveling in this country during my stint representing writers. I spoke to writing groups at the universities of Georgia and South Florida, California State College, Indiana University, Wagner College, Columbia, and the New School; I was the participating agent in three of the Radcliffe College publishing courses, and I even spoke to the Westchester Women's Club and to the students at Miss Porter's at Farmington.

Although I made a number of trips to California in the interests of selling motion picture rights, I never could fit into the way of life "out there" in Los Angeles, Beverly Hills, Hollywood, and Bel Air. I remember how upset my client Gore Vidal was when my wife and I took him to dinner at Chasen's and we were put at a table in the rear. And in a suite at the Beverly Hills Hotel, someone came and took away my flowers and candy and cookies because the hotel had sent them to me by mistake. I can still see my attractive, socially secure client and friend Marguerite Gilbert McCarthy, author of *The Cook Is in the Parlor*, driving up to the hotel in her ancient little Chevrolet. What a relief it was from the Cadillacs and British cars the fashionable film people drove! The Mercedes had not yet made its re-entry after the war.

In 1978 I was "captured" by the British. On my many visits to London I had made many friends among agents and publishers there. As a midshipman at Annapolis, I visited London in the summer of 1931. President Herbert Hoover, our commander-in-chief, had decreed that, in the interests of conserving space on the battleships, our everyday double-breasted blue uniforms would be our formal attire for black-tie affairs abroad. The British were not impressed by the order of the president of their lost colonies, and to dine in London with friends at restaurants and at the then fashionable Kit Kat Club, and even in my own hotel, I was forced to rent a dinner jacket, a breach of the rules for which, had I been discovered, I would have suffered demerits and some punishment. This was the beginning of a feeling I had against the Brits that was not dispelled until my association with Curtis Brown in London began in 1978. I
became a member of the board of Curtis Brown, London, and in New York took over their office at 25 West 43rd Street (the so-called New Yorker building), leaving my office of twenty-eight years at 22 East 60th Street—the attractive French Institute Building. (When I ended my career I was at 575 Madison Avenue.)

As James Brown Associates, before our "marriage" to Curtis Brown, London, we had represented Brits—the Arthur Conan Doyle Estate, Sir Arthur’s son, Adrian Conan Doyle, Hugh Fraser, Cecil Beaton, Anthony Blond, Jessica Mitford, and Brian Glanville, among others. Now we added to our list, to name only a few, Mary Renault, Daphne du Maurier, Sarah Churchill, Lawrence and Gerald Durrell, John Julius Norwich, Angus Wilson, Hugh Thomas, David Lodge, Michael Pye, Brian Inglis, Montgomery Hyde, Julian Symons, Nicholas Freeling, Dorothy Dunnett, John Ranelagh, Patricia Moyes, Patrick White, James Aldridge, and Antonia Fraser.

One of my special British authors was C. P. Snow, with whom I had a close friendship interrupted too soon by his death. Charlie Scribner III, Snow’s publisher, telephoned one day and asked me who Kate Marsh was. Lord Snow had just asked, on receiving copies of his novel A Coat of Varnish and being puzzled by the dedication, "For Kate Marsh." Kate Marsh was the assistant to Graham Watson, Snow’s agent in my London office, and at some point a copy of the typescript had been delivered there with the notation, "For Kate Marsh." The American typesetter, or whoever, assumed incorrectly that the note was a dedication. I never heard what Lady Snow thought of all this—whether she had doubts about her husband’s claiming not to know the very proper Kate Marsh.

I enjoy being retired, being able to tell about myself instead of listening as I did for so many years to writers talking about themselves. I now buy and read books without having to think what I shall do with what I read. I’ve joined the world of contented book readers. Occasionally I read a manuscript from my friends Louis Auchincloss, Herbert Gold, and Mickey Friedman, and others, before the manuscript becomes a book, and that also is a pleasure requiring no responsibility. It was and is a good life.
Nineteenth-Century Photography at Columbia

In 1839 the announcement of Daguerre’s process for making unique, positive images on silver-coated copper plates was followed several weeks later by the presentation of Fox Talbot’s paper outlining his method for producing paper negatives from which unlimited numbers of positive prints could be made. Commemorating the 150th anniversary of photography, the Libraries mounted in September 1989 an exhibition of photographic treasures, entitled “Nineteenth-Century Photography at Columbia University,” that was on view in the Rotunda of Low Memorial Library. The exhibition was curated by Herbert Mitchell of the Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library and by Sarah Elliston Weiner of the Office of Art Properties.

Avery Library, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbiana, and Art Properties are the chief repositories of early photographs at the University. From Avery’s rich holdings came some rare salted paper prints such as the view of New York’s Crystal Palace and Victor Prévost’s Chateau of Pierrefonds, the magnificent album of views of New Orleans by George François Mugnier, and the delicate image of foliage by Frank Lloyd Wright. An outstanding group of prints in the Columbiana Collection was made by Nathaniel Fish Moore, eighth president of Columbia College, who after his retirement became an accomplished amateur photographer. Fox Talbot’s calotype “The Haystack,” from Art Properties, was also exhibited, while a daguerreotype of Edgar Allen Poe, a prized holding of the Rare Book and Manuscript Library, was on view in Butler Library.

For the richness and range of its nineteenth-century photographic holdings, Columbia is greatly indebted to Charles Frederick Chandler, a professor of chemistry at the University from 1864 to 1910, who was an ardent enthusiast of the photographic medium in
all its forms. Also an avid collector, he established at Columbia a chemical museum notable for its extensive holdings of photographs and photomechanical reproductions. Much of this material has since found its way into the Libraries’ collections.

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**Catalogue**

1. William Henry Fox Talbot (1800–1877)
   The Haystack, 1845
   Calotype
   Art Properties, from the Chandler Chemical Museum

2. Unidentified photographer
   Crystal Palace, New York City, ca. 1853
   Salted paper print
   Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library; gift of the Edilitz Family

3. William Abbott Pratt (1818–1879)
   Portrait of Edgar Allen Poe, 1849
   Daguerreotype
   Rare Book and Manuscript Library; gift of Mrs. Alexander McMillen Welsh

4. Victor Prévost (1820–1881)
   Chateau de Pierrefonds, 1853
   Calotype
   Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library

5. Nathaniel Fish Moore (1782–1872)
   Four Women Seated by a Tree, 1850s
   Calotype
   Columbiana Collection

6. Unidentified photographer
   Department of Chemistry, Class of 1860
   Salted paper print
   Art Properties, from the Chandler Chemical Museum
7. Lewis M. Rutherfurd (1816–1892)
   Moon, 1865
   Albumen print, published by O. G. Mason, New York City
   Rare Book and Manuscript Library, from the
   Chandler Chemical Museum

8. John E. Dumont (active 1880s–1900s)
   Listening to the Birds, 1885
   Photomechanical print on tissue paper
   Rare Book and Manuscript Library, from the
   Chandler Chemical Museum

9. Baker’s Art Gallery, Columbus, Ohio
   Muse (Terpsichore?), 1895
   Silver print
   Rare Book and Manuscript Library, from the
   Chandler Chemical Museum

10. George François Mugnier (ca. 1857–1938)
    On the Waterfront in New Orleans, between 1880 and 1895
    Albumen or gelatin silver print
    Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library

11. George François Mugnier (ca. 1857–1938)
    Two Women and a Man Seated by a Shack, between 1880 and 1895
    Albumen or gelatin silver print
    Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library

12. Frank Lloyd Wright (1867–1959)
    Shrubs, 1890s
    Photomechanical print
    Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library, from the
    John Lloyd Wright Collection
Our Growing Collections

KENNETH A. LOHF

*Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library gift.* Knowing of the extensive holdings of manuscripts and printed editions of Frederic Dannay and Manfred Lee (who wrote and published under the pseudonym Ellery Queen) at the Rare Book and Manuscript Library, the Beinecke Library at Yale University, through the generous assistance of Ms. Patricia C. Willis, has transferred to the Library complete bound and single issue files of the *Ellery Queen Mystery Magazine* covering the period from the first issue, which appeared in autumn 1941, through the June 1975 issue. We have had complete files of the typescripts and manuscripts of the stories that appeared in the famous detective magazine, but have heretofore lacked a file of printed issues to complete the bibliographic record. In addition, the Beinecke Library has donated to the collection sixty-three scripts, bearing Frederic Dannay’s handwritten corrections and notations, of the radio series “Adventures of Ellery Queen,” which was broadcast on the CBS and NBC networks from 1939 to 1948.

*Blau gift.* The papers of the late Professor Joseph L. Blau (A.B., 1931; A.M., 1933; Ph.D., 1945) have been presented by Mrs. Eleanor W. Blau. The more than thirty thousand letters and manuscripts in the collection document Professor Blau’s teaching career at the University in the departments of Philosophy and Religion; he served as chairman of the Department of Religion from 1965 to 1968 and as director of graduate studies in religion from 1962 to 1974. The papers contain Professor Blau’s correspondence with colleagues and publishers, notes and manuscripts relating to his articles and lectures, scripts for radio and television broadcasts and for motion pictures, notes for lectures, and printed copies of his books, articles, reviews, and essays, many of which are annotated or inscribed.
Bowman gift. Professor Walter P. Bowman (A.M., 1933; Ph.D., 1942) has donated an additional twelve titles by and relating to Milton, among which are: *Comus and Other Poems*, 1906, one of 250 copies printed on hand-made paper at the University Press,

The first issue of the *Ellery Queen Mystery Magazine* (Beinecke Library gift)

Cambridge; *Aeropagitica*, a Noel Douglas Replica published by the Cambridge University Press in 1927; and *The Poetical Works*, three folio volumes, 1794–97, printed by W. Bulmer for John and Josiah Boydell and George Nicol, with plates from designs by Richard Westall.

Clifford gift. The papers of the late Professor James L. Clifford have been enlarged and strengthened by the recent gift from Mrs. Virginia Clifford of more than ten thousand letters, manuscripts, and
notes relating to Professor Clifford’s teaching and writing careers, including: correspondence with colleagues and friends dating from 1929 to the 1980s; research notes on Boswell, Mrs. Piozzi, and Dr. Johnson, among other eighteenth-century writers and subjects; and files concerning Professor Clifford’s books *Dictionary Johnson*, *Young Sam Johnson*, and *From Puzzles to Portraits*. Mrs. Clifford’s gift also included seven original letters and documents written by Mrs. Piozzi and her husband, Gabriele Piozzi, several of which relate to their wills and financial matters, and seven letters written to, or relating to, Mrs. Piozzi; a contemporary watercolor drawing of Mrs. Piozzi’s house at Streatham; and engravings of portraits and places associated with Mrs. Piozzi.

*Gerstman gift.* Knowing of the Rare Book and Manuscript Library’s George Antheil Collection, Mrs. Mira Gerstman has presented for addition to it the orchestral score of the composer’s Fourth Symphony, written in 1942. One of only two known copies of the original score reproduced from Antheil’s holograph manuscript, the score, comprising 102 folio pages in a spiral binding, is inscribed by Antheil to Mrs. Gerstman on the title leaf and contains additional pencil notations throughout by the composer.

*Grand Street Publications gift.* Grand Street Publications, Inc., has donated, for inclusion in the papers of the literary quarterly *Grand Street*, the editorial and production files pertaining to volumes seven and eight, published from autumn 1987 to summer 1989. Included in the gift are approximately 850 letters, manuscripts, and proofs of poets and short story writers, among them, Brigid Brophy, Stanley Elkin, Gavin Ewart, W. S. Merwin, Joyce Carol Oates, Virgil Thomson, and John Updike.

*Harper gift.* For addition to the Harper & Brothers and Harper & Row collections, the publishing house has presented a number of important and distinguished manuscripts, printed materials, and pieces of memorabilia relating to its publications in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The fifty-five letters, manuscripts, and documents from the earlier period include: the contracts for Herman
Melville's *Omoo: A Narrative of Adventure in the South Seas*, dated December 18, 1846, and Henry James’s *Washington Square*, dated May 19, 1880, each signed by the novelist; the contract agreement between the Harper brothers, dated May 26, 1886, signed by six members of the Harper family; two ledgers containing the copyright records of the firm from 1827 to 1923; and letters from a number of writers, among them Thomas Hardy, Samuel L. Clemens, LaFCadio Hearn, and Woodrow Wilson. Among twentieth-century authors in the gift there are letters and manuscripts.
from James Baldwin, Ethel Barrymore, Martin Buber, Erskine Caldwell, John Dos Passos, John F. Kennedy, Thomas Mann, Marianne Moore, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Carl Sandburg, George Bernard Shaw, and Harry S. Truman. There are, in addition, photographs, printed ephemera, engraving blocks, and lithographs.

**Henderson gift.** Mr. Gordon G. Henderson (A.B., 1953; A.M., 1954; Ph.D., 1962) has donated, for inclusion in the Mark Van Doren Papers, three letters he received from Professor Van Doren in 1965 and 1967. The letters comment on Professor Van Doren’s writing, his lectures, Mr. Henderson’s “Notes on Mississippi,” and William Faulkner’s birthplace, among other subjects.

**Hornick gift.** Mrs. Lita Hornick (A.B., 1948, B.; A.M., 1949; Ph.D., 1958) has donated a group of thirty-eight illustrated volumes she has published under the imprint of Kulchur Press from 1966 to the 1980s, as well as an inscribed copy of her autobiography, *The Green Fuse*, published last year by Giorno Poetry Systems. Among the Kulchur Press books are important works of poetry by avant garde writers of the New York school, including David Antin, Tom Clark, Charles Henri Ford, Jean Giorno, Kenneth Koch, Richard Kostelanetz, Rochelle Owens, and others. The most important of the volumes in Mrs. Hornick’s gift are Gerard Malanga and Andy Warhol’s *Screen Tests/A Diary* (1967) and Ted Berrigan, Ron Padgett, and Joe Brainard’s *Bean Spasms*. Mrs. Hornick has also donated a complete file of *Kulchur* magazine, a literary journal published from 1960 to 1965 and edited by Mrs. Hornick from 1962 to 1965.

**Horton gift.** The distinguished American book conservator Mrs. Carolyn Horton has established a collection of her papers at the Rare Book and Manuscript Library with the gift of eighteen thousand pieces of correspondence, manuscripts, and business and financial records documenting her work for individual clients, collectors, libraries, museums, and book dealers over more than fifty years. The subject files contain materials on specific books and works of art; notes for seminars and lectures on the preservation of
books and documents on paper; and the 1966 flood in Florence, Italy, and the restoration work that ensued. The business records consist of detailed worksheets for individual books and manuscripts, describing the condition of items bound or restored and the type of work done on the items. The files contain a wealth of material for the study of conservation work done in this century by one of the most important and influential artisans in the field.

*Lamont gift.* Dr. Corliss Lamont (Ph.D., 1932), who has been responsible for the establishment and development of the Rare Book and Manuscript Library’s John Masefield Collection, has recently presented funds for the acquisition of an important and interesting series of eighty-six letters written by the poet laureate to Barbara Vernon, a ballerina who danced under the name of Brangwen. Masefield met her in the summer of 1939, when she danced the role of Brangwen in the Tristan–King Mark legend at the Oxford Summer Diversions, and was captivated by her presence and her dancing; she became known to him as Brangwen. Although they met only twice, their friendship through correspondence was to last for more than twenty years. Dr. Lamont has acquired for the Masefield Collection this fascinating series of letters, dating from 1939 to 1959, in which the poet discusses, with warmth and affection, Brangwen’s ballet engagements, scenarios for ballets, the Anglo-Polish Ballet Company, his writings and publications, the theater in Oxford, and life during wartime, among numerous other subjects. The collection also includes several printings on cards and leaflets of Masefield’s poems.

*Norton gift.* W. W. Norton & Company, through the office of the president, Mr. Donald S. Lamm, has presented the papers of William Warder Norton, founder of the publishing house and its president from 1926 until his death in 1945. Numbering some 3,500 items and dating from the 1930s and 1940s, the papers contain correspondence pertaining to the publication of books under the Norton imprint as well as to the professional organizations with which Mr. Norton was associated, among them Publishers’ Lunch Club,
Council on Books in Wartime, and Armed Services Editions. The files of correspondence with authors include letters from Roger Baldwin, Irwin Edman, Douglas Moore, Daniel Gregory Mason, Robert Nathan, Romain Rolland, and Bertrand Russell.

Plimpton gift. A sizable addition has been made to the papers of Francis T. P. Plimpton by Mrs. Plimpton, comprising some thirteen thousand letters and manuscripts pertaining to legal, personal, philanthropic, real estate, governmental, and educational matters. The correspondence files contain letters from a wide range of friends and associates, among them Dean Acheson, Louis Auchincloss, George Bush, Thomas Dewey, Felix Frankfurter, Lyndon Johnson, Nelson Rockefeller, and Adlai Stevenson. Files of Mr. Plimpton’s speeches and writings are included, as well as extensive records relating to the Villa Balbianella on Lake Como, Italy, inherited by Mrs. Plimpton from her uncle, Butler Ames, and administered by Mr. Plimpton from 1954 until 1983. Mrs. Plimpton’s gift also includes several eighteenth- and nineteenth-century editions of literary works by Charles Dickens, George Eliot, Oliver Goldsmith, James Northcote, and Percy Bysshe Shelley.


Saxon gift. A substantial addition has been made by Mrs. Nancy Saxon (A.B., 1944, B.) to the collection of cartoon drawings by her husband, the late Charles Saxon (A.B., 1940). Among the more than one thousand items recently presented by Mrs. Saxon are: watercolor and charcoal drawings for cartoons, covers of *The New Yorker*, and spreads for *Sports Illustrated*, *The New Yorker*, and other magazines, including the series entitled “The Trip,” “What People
Our Growing Collections

Drink," "Panky in Love," and "The Day the Trains Stopped"; numerous preliminary rough sketches for cartoons and other drawings; and two sketchbooks in which Charles Saxon recorded the landscape and people of southern European countries through which he traveled during the 1970s. Mrs. Saxon also presented a brush and ink drawing of the head of Christ by Thomas Merton, which was given to Charles Saxon by the artist in 1939 at the time both attended Columbia.

Schaefler gift. Mr. Sam Schaefler and his wife, Katalin, have presented a group of rare printed and manuscript items. Most important among the printed rarities is Samuel Foster, Miscellanies: or, Mathematical Lucubrations, London, 1659, translated by John Twysden; bound in is a manuscript containing an English version of the Latin dedication to the translator’s nephew, Henry Yelverton, which, because of internal evidence, appears to be the source for the Latin dedication. Among other printed items are Vocabulaire des
1916
"LA TRIENNALE"
EXPOSITION D'ART FRANÇAIS
AU PROFIT DE LA "FRATERNITÉ DES ARTISTES"

SALLE DU JEU DE PAUME
TERRASSE DES TUILERIES
DU 2 MARS AU 15 AVRIL 1916
DE 9 HEURES DU MATIN
À LA TOMBÉE DU JOUR
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PRIX D'ENTRÉE:
Le jour du vernissage 5 fr.
Les autres jours 1 fr.
Le dimanche 0.50

Poster by Théophile Steinlen (Schaeffer gift)
Our Growing Collections

Enfants, 1839, with woodcuts by Honoré Daumier and others; Émile Verhaeren, Quinze Poèmes, 1917, with woodcuts by Frans Masereel; and several French posters, the most impressive of which is that designed by Théophile Steinlen for the 1916 Triennale Exposition d'Art Français in support of the war effort. The autograph material in the Schaeflers' gift is also impressive and includes: a fifteenth-century manuscript of prognostications for the year 1482; a document signed by Thomas Dongan, Governor of New York, dated October 6, 1684, naming Roelf Martinen as Justice of the Peace in Kings County, among the earliest recorded juridical nominations in New York City; signed documents of Civil War generals, among them Francis P. Blair, Thomas F. Meagher, Fitz-John Porter, and Daniel E. Sickles; and literary autographs, including important letters from Nathaniel P. Willis, Vachel Lindsay, and Pearl S. Buck.

Sykes gift. Mrs. Claire Sykes has presented 679 volumes, many inscribed or containing notes and annotations, from the library of her late husband, Gerald Sykes, including important texts in the fields of modern psychology, sociology, intellectual history, political science, and European and American literature, among numerous other subjects. Of special interest in the gift are first editions of books by Kay Boyle, Frederick Buechner, Malcolm Cowley, Leon Edel, William Gass, Herbert Gold, Paul Horgan, Allen Tate, and Glenway Wescott.
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