

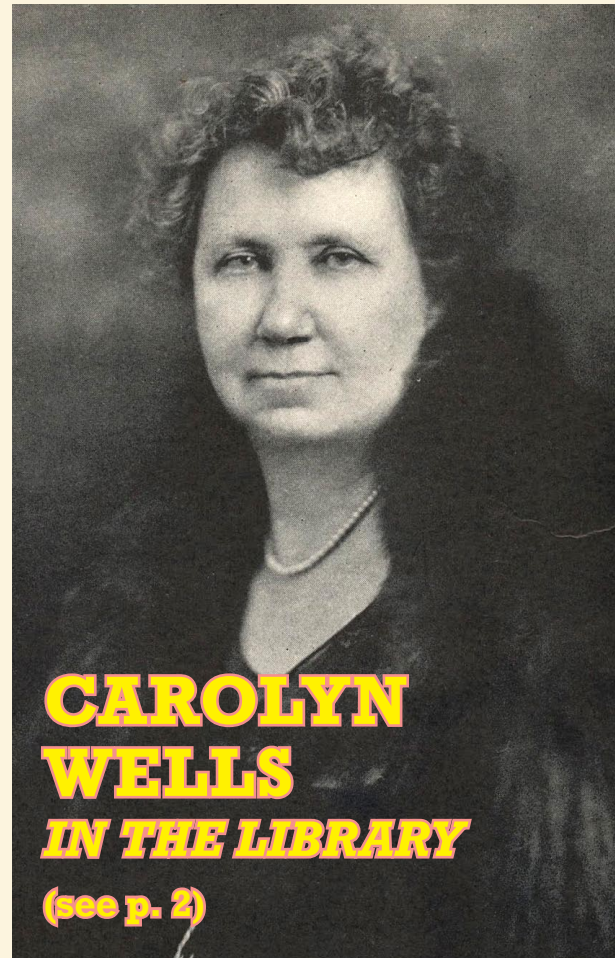
The Florida Bibliophile

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Deadline for the April newsletter is March 31, 2021.
See page 26 for details.

Membership in the Fellowship of American Bibliophilic Societies is included with your FBS membership. The FABS newsletter is now electronic as well as in print. Access a PDF of the Fall 2020 FABS Journal [here](#).



Florida Bibliophile Society
A community of book lovers

Minutes of the February Meeting of the Florida Bibliophile Society

by Gary Simons, FBS Secretary

A few Zoom snafus delayed the start of the meeting, but Jerry Morris was able to resolve them in short order, and we began our meeting with the normal group of FBS members as well as a number of visitors from several other clubs who had apparently been attracted by our presenter, Rebecca Rego Barry, editor of *Fine Books & Collections* magazine.

At the start of the meeting, Charles Brown welcomed and introduced some of our guests, and revealed the location of the “Where’s Bernie” image puzzle in the February issue of *The Florida Bibliophile*. He then turned the meeting over to Jerry, who introduced our speaker.

Ms. Barry has undergraduate degrees in both English and Magazine Journalism, and a Masters degree in Book History. Besides editing *Fine Books & Collections*, she writes extensively – so extensively, in fact, that her website, <https://rebeccaregobarry.com/>, lists the titles of no fewer than 116 magazine articles, 21 essays, and 37 book reviews, as well as her 2015 book, *Rare Books Uncovered: True Stories of Fantastic Finds in Unlikely Places*. As Jerry pointed out in his introduction, the Florida Bibliophile Society has had the pleasure of hearing from Rebecca before, at a book signing party in November 2015.

One of Rebecca’s articles in *Crime Reads Magazine* concerned the prolific writer Caroline Wells, and indeed, “Caroline Wells in the Library” was the title of her talk today. (FBS members may recall that at our November meeting, when our speaker Mark Samuels Lasner and his partner Margaret Stetz were asked about a good subject for a collector, they responded “Caroline Wells” – and just a few short months later, with Mark and Margaret now part of the audience, we were learning more about the very same writer. Oh the literary threads that weave through the world of bibliophiles!)

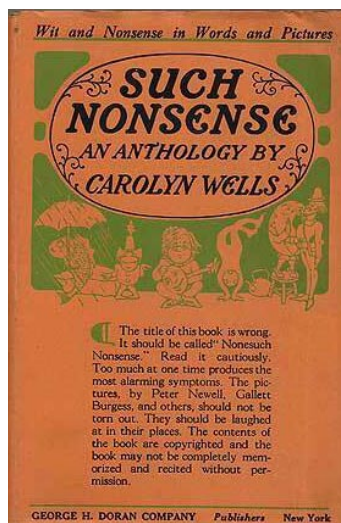
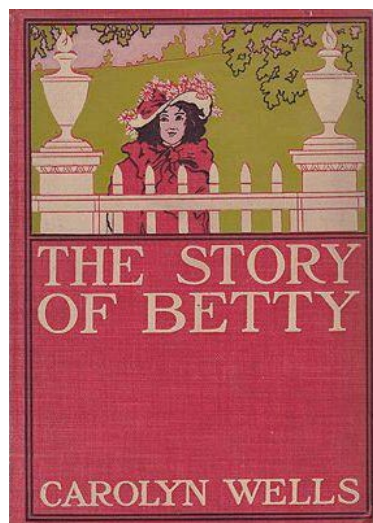
In brief, Carolyn Wells Houghton (1862–1942) was a notable librarian, author, and book collector. She wrote approximately 167 books – no one is



Born in 1862 to an affluent New Jersey family, Carolyn Wells grew up in the Gilded Age, a period of rapid change and economic growth. Carolyn Wells survived a childhood case of scarlet fever, then a major cause of children’s deaths. It resulted in a severe hearing problem that progressed to deafness as she aged.

sure of the exact count – of which roughly half are mysteries. And she amassed a comprehensive collection of Walt Whitman materials which now resides at the Library of Congress as the [Carolyn Wells Houghton Whitman Collection](#).

Rebecca began by showing a first edition of Thoreau’s *Walden* which she had received about ten years ago, and which bore the bookplate of Carolyn Wells, with its characteristic gargoyle-like “Lincoln Imp.” The bookplate prompted Rebecca’s interest in Wells. As years went by, Rebecca saw works in various genres by Wells at book fairs. She showed us images of three very different works: *The Story of Betty* (1899), *Such Nonsense* (1918), and *The Radio Studio Murder* (1937). Rebecca told us she came to wonder “who is the person [who writes in so many genres]; she must have a really great story.”

Minutes, continued

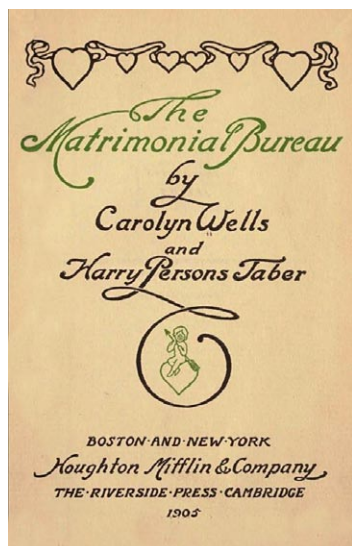
In 2019, a Wells book, *Murder in the Book Shop*, was republished, and in the process of preparing an article on that book, Rebecca reached out to Margaret Stetz as a Carolyn Wells aficionado, read Wells's memoir, and speculated as to why Wells wasn't now better known. Digging through Wells's paper trail, she learned that Wells grew up in Rahway, New Jersey, daughter of a successful insurance salesman. At

age six, she caught scarlet fever, which led to lifelong progressive deafness. An excellent student, Carolyn Wells became the town librarian and stayed in that position through 1902. In her later years as a librarian, she began writing material for children, as demonstrated by her *The Jingle Book* (1899), which contains an Alice-themed alphabet. In 1904, according to the review magazine *The Critic*, Wells "made a mad dash into the great field of fiction" with a novel, *The Matrimonial Bureau*. Soon

and reviews for serious literary magazines. And then, at the age of 47 in 1909, she turned yet another new page with her first mystery, *The Clue*. This move was timely as public interest in crime fiction was then burgeoning. A few years later, exploiting her rapidly developing expertise, she wrote *The Technique of the Mystery Story*. Between 1909 and 1942 Carolyn Wells wrote 61 mysteries centered on a detective named Fleming Stone – this series probably remains her most collectible work.

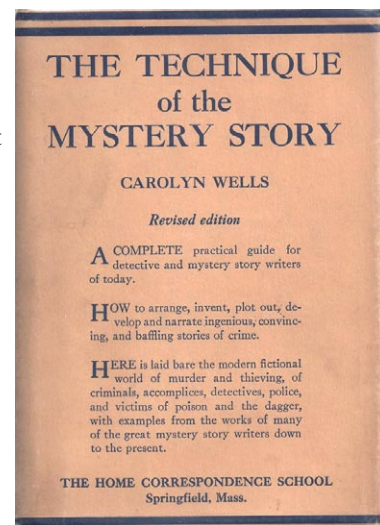
Wells was not bashful about defending roles for women as both writers and readers. In 1930, in the magazine *True Detective Mysteries*, she contended that "intellect is impartially distributed between the sexes, and if in all ages man has achieved more lasting fame, raised to themselves more enduring monuments, it is not because of a superior brain, but because of a multitude of other reasons and causes which may not be enumerated, however."

Her personal life is unfortunately thinly documented. In 1918, at age 55, Wells married Hadwin Houghton, a moneyed scion of a famous publishing family, and



Wells wrote *The Matrimonial Bureau* (1905) with Harry Persons Taber. Taber was well known as the editor for Elbert Hubbard's Roycroft Press until 1895.

afterward, she started writing young adult fiction (which Rebecca noted was comparable to *The Bobbsey Twins*). Simultaneously, Wells was writing articles



Minutes, concluded

A. Edward Newton (1864–1940), author and avid book collector, best known for his 1928 book *This Book-Collecting Game*.



Albert F. Goldsmith (1881–1947) dropped out of dental school to go into business and ended up in the rare book trade. He was an expert on Americana, particularly Walt Whitman.

moved to an elaborate Central Park apartment in New York City where she lived for the rest of her life. She lived a moneyed life in sumptuous luxury, and associated with famous personages in the political and literary worlds. Apparently, Herbert Hoover was a long-term friend, as well as a fan of her crime fiction. Well-known figures in the world of book collecting, such as A. Edward Newton and antiquarian bookseller Alfred F. Goldsmith, helped shape her as a book collector. Wells wrote that Newton introduced her to collecting, and Alfred Goldsmith and his wife Ray were instrumental in her specializing in the works of Walt Whitman. Her collection included 100 copies of *Leaves of Grass*; jokingly, she called herself a “Leaves-of-Grass-hopper.” She and Goldsmith jointly developed a bibliography of the works of Walt Whitman that was published in

1922. She wrote [about Whitman] that “he is not my favorite poet; I don’t know who is, but he is America’s foremost and greatest singer.” (During the Q&A session Margaret Stetz added that it was the challenge of collecting Whitman, rather than any particular interest in the poet, that drew Wells on.)

After Carolyn Wells had collected a writer or an area, she moved on.

Rebecca noted with some envy Wells’s ability to weed books. Wells initially tried to buy two of everything that met her interest, but she subsequently got rid of her extra copies. A 1923 auction featured 305 lots of Wells’s duplicates.

Much of what we know of Wells’s personal life comes from her 1937 autobiography, *The Rest of My Life*, which Rebecca characterized as unconventional and nonlinear. When Wells died in 1942, her principal legatee was her maid and companion, Bridgette Mary

O’Connell. Unfortunately, only a small sampling of what must have been a voluminous correspondence has been thus far traced, and her manuscripts and other materials are presumed to have been destroyed.

During her conclusion, Rebecca mused on the possible viability of a long-term project on Carolyn Wells. During her lifetime she was such a major figure on the American literary landscape, but now she has almost vanished from view.

Perhaps her mysteries are dated, but her humor may still draw interest: Rebecca opined that Wells was “really funny and sometimes even vicious.” So little is known – can enough information be found?

A spirited question-and-answer session addressed issues including the designers of her book covers; ways in which more of Wells’s letters might be found; her interest in material objects associated with Whitman; and the possible existence of movie treatments of Wells’s works.

* * *

MISS CAROLYN WELLS WEDS HARDWIN HOUGHTON.

The marriage of Hadwin Houghton, a son of the late Bernard Houghton, who was with the publishing firm of Houghton, Mifflin & Co., of Boston, and Miss Carolyn Wells, the author, and daughter of Mrs. William E. Wells, of Rahway, N. J., was celebrated yesterday afternoon at 4 o’clock at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Frank J. Sprague, 241 West End avenue, the Rev. Huber Gray Buehler, Head Master of the Hotchkiss Preparatory School at Lakeville, Conn., performing the ceremony in the presence of the nearest relatives and a few close friends.

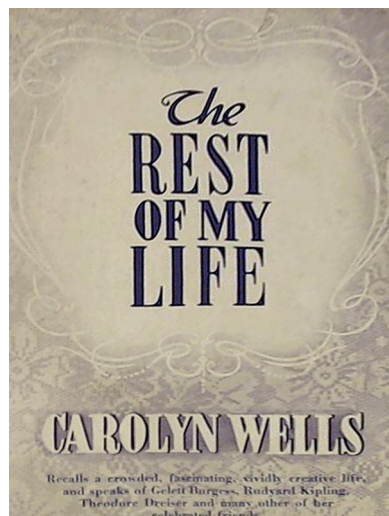
Miss Wells, in blue chiffon brocade in blue velvet over blue metal cloth, topped by a large black lace hat and carrying clusters of la France roses, was attended by her young nieces, Miss Marjorie Wells, of Brooklyn, in la France pink, and two little flower girls, Althea Sprague, daughter of Mrs. Sprague, and Miss Buehler, the daughter of the officiating clergyman, in white organdie frocks, with quaint sashes, carrying baskets of roses. Herbert Wells gave his sister in marriage.

Mr. Houghton has taken an apartment at the Hotel d’Aristes, where they will live on their return from their honeymoon. Mrs. Houghton and Mr. Houghton have known each other for many years. Mr. Houghton was a widower.

Miss Wells is the sister of Walter Wells, vice president of the Edison Electric Company.

* * *

Wedding announcement of Miss Carolyn Wells to Mr. W. Hadwin Houghton, *Brooklyn Times*, Wednesday, April 3, 1918.



The Rest of My Life (1937) was Wells’s unconventional, episodic autobiography. Despite friends’ urging, she had often refused to write her story. Then her doctor told her that despite her heart condition, she would probably live to 90, and she began planning ‘the rest of her life.’ The *New York Times* gave a favorable review, praising “the valiant, whimsical, dancing spirit that dances through the whole book.”

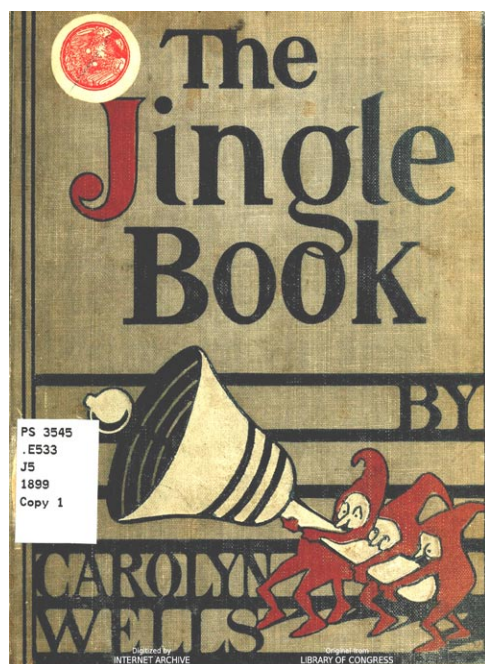
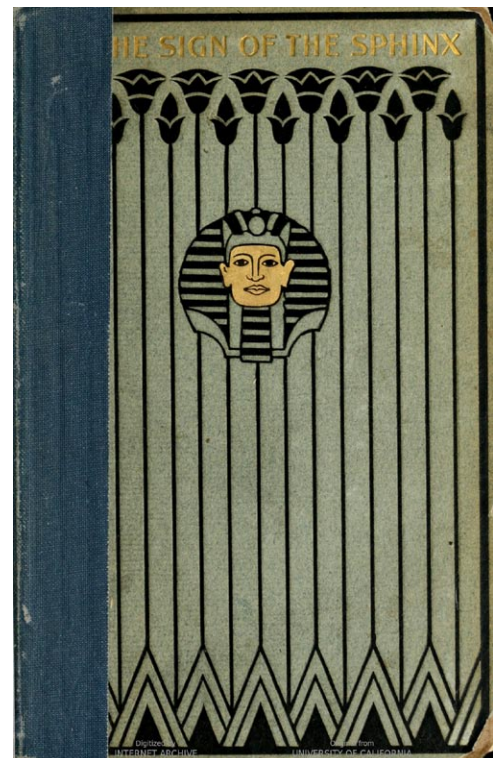


The Books of Carolyn Wells

In 1937, when Carolyn Wells published her autobiography, *The Rest of My Life*, 167 books were attributed to her. These books included children's books, light verse, humor, and mysteries. The famous mystery writer Dashiell Hammett found her mysteries mechanical, but readers loved her work, and her writing earned her fame and money. She was published by most of the major publishers of her day, including Lippincott, Doran, Scribners, and of course Houghton, among others. Her publishers hired the most popular illustrators, producing attractive books for one's self or for gifts. On the following pages, a selection of books from each of these categories is presented to illustrate the range of Wells's work. Carolyn Wells's books published before 1923 are in the public domain and available online.

At the Sign of the Sphinx: A Book of Charades (Stone & Kimball, 1896), illustrated by Claude Bragdon. This early book by Wells is an example of her light verse. It is a series of riddles in verse. This repaired copy shows the cover of the first edition. The reprint edition did not have the gold stamping. There was also a sequel with the same title, labeled "Second Series." The book is dedicated to the educator and Shakespearean scholar Dr. William J. Rolfe:

The dearest friend to me, the kindest man,
The best-condition'd and unwearied spirit
In doing courtesies.



The Jingle Book (MacMillan, 1899), illustrated by Oliver Herford, is one of Wells's better known books.

It contains amusing limericks and stories in verse for children. Examples include "The Very Merry Voyage of the Macaroni Man," "The Grandiloquent Goat," "The Rhyme of Triangular Tommy" (accompanied by tangram puzzles), and "An Alice Alphabet" (accompanied by John Tenniel's illustrations for *Alice*, also published by MacMillan). The book is dedicated "To Hilda's Child."

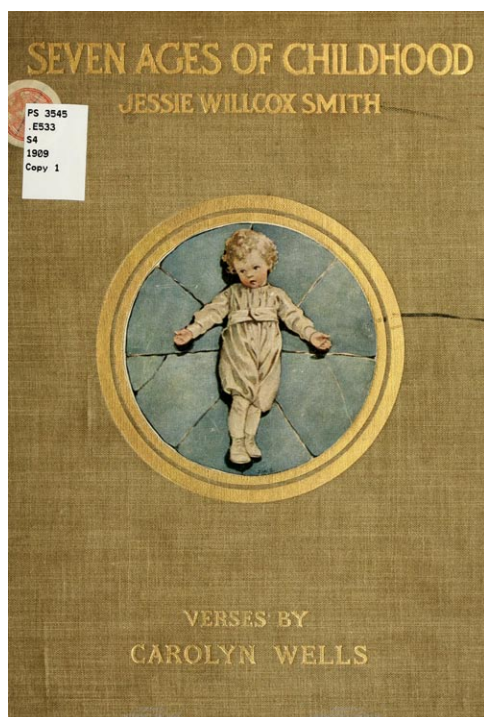
This book is available in its entirety on the Internet. Audio versions are available through Librivox and YouTube. Many sites confuse Wells's *The Jingle Book* with Kipling's *The Jungle Book*.

Books of Carolyn Wells, continued

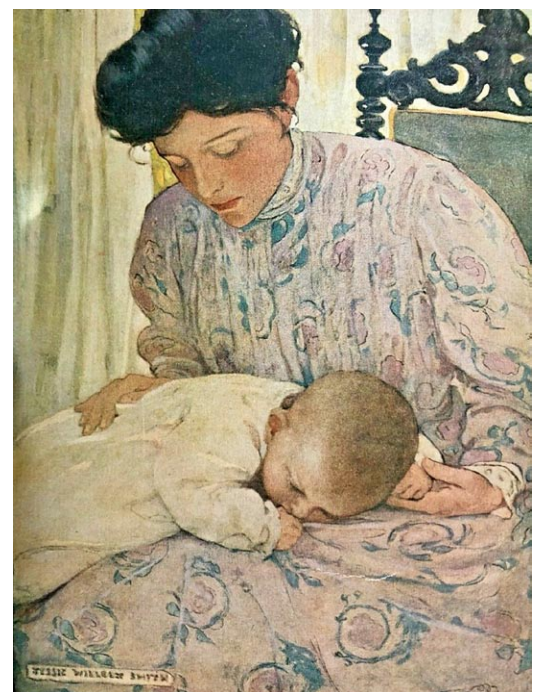
Mother Goose's Menagerie (Noyes & Platt, 1901), illustrated by Peter Newell. Tim and Tilly meet Mother Goose one morning, and she invites them to visit her zoo (frontispiece, above right).

Wells tells fifteen verse stories of Tim and Tilly's encounters with familiar Mother Goose characters, accompanied by twelve Peter Newell illustrations.

Note Newell's billing on the cover; he was already famous for his illustrations in *Harper's Weekly*, *Saturday Evening Post*, and many other publications, as well as his own children's books.



Seven Ages of Childhood (Moffat, Yard & Co., 1909), illustrated by Jessie Willcox Smith. Wells paints a series of verse portraits of childhood from infancy to young adulthood. The cover, endpapers, and pages are decorated with illustrations by Jessie Willcox Smith, another famous illustrator.

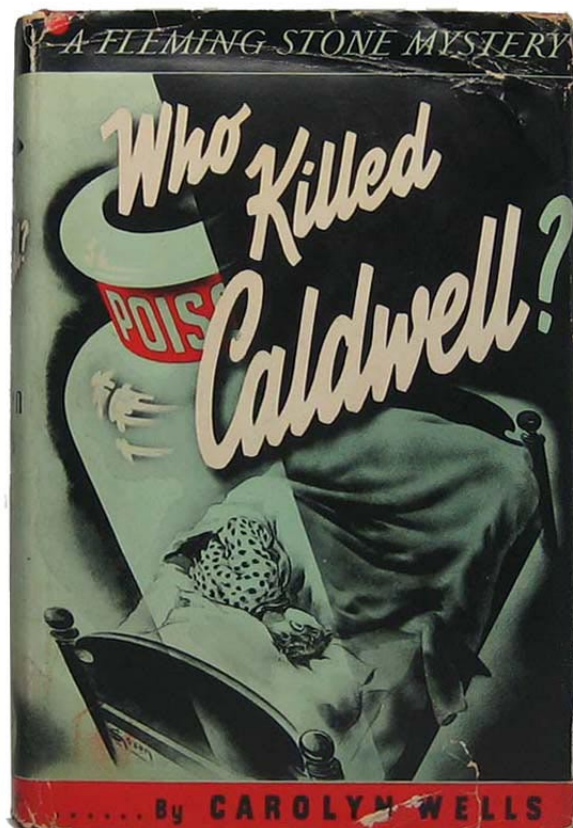


Books of Carolyn Wells, continued

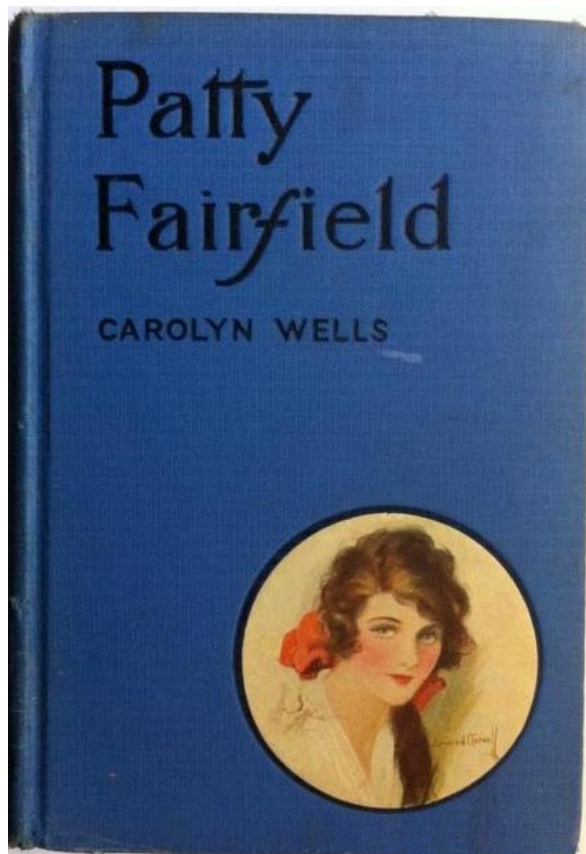
The Clue (J. B. Lippincott Co., 1909; second edition: A. L. Burt, 1918), frontispiece by Frances Rogers. This is the first of the Fleming Stone mysteries. Wells wrote 61 books in this popular series between 1909 and 1942. In this one, the most eligible young woman in her state, Madeleine Van Norman, or “Magnificent Madeleine,” is murdered in a locked room on the eve of her wedding. Only the great detective Fleming Stone can solve this one. He is introduced in the penultimate chapter, after others have pursued all the leads and developed many clues:

Fleming Stone was of a most attractive personality. He was nearly fifty years old, with graying hair and a kindly, responsive face.

At dinner he had won the admiration of all by his tact and interesting conversation. At the table the business upon which he had come had not been mentioned, but now the group assembled in the library felt that the time had come to talk of the matter.



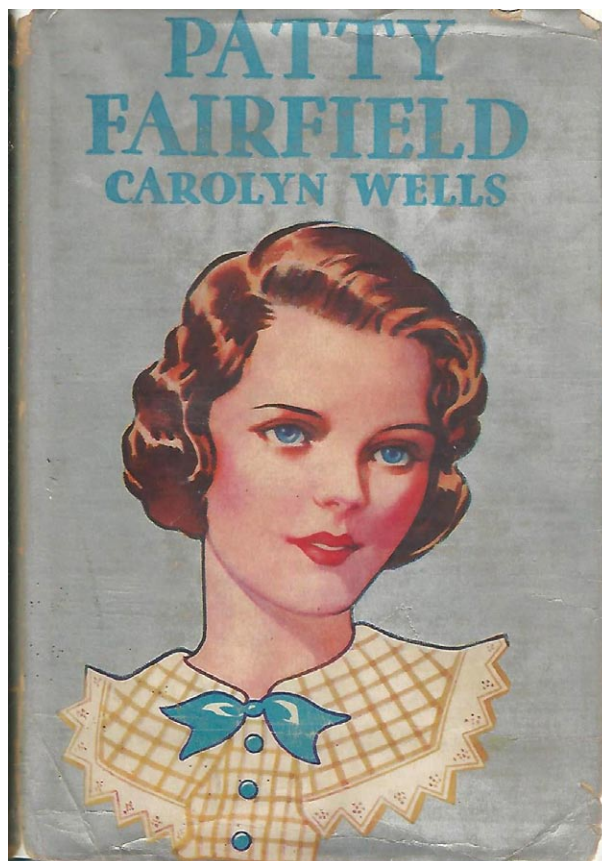
Who Killed Caldwell? (J. B. Lippincott Co., 1942). This is the last of the Fleming Stone mysteries, published in the year of Wells’s death. Irving Caldwell celebrates the return of his son Archer after a fourteen-year absence. Within days, Irving is dead, poisoned, after changing his will in favor of Archer. But is this the real Archer?

Books of Carolyn Wells,, continued**Patty Fairfield (Grossett & Dunlap, 1901).**

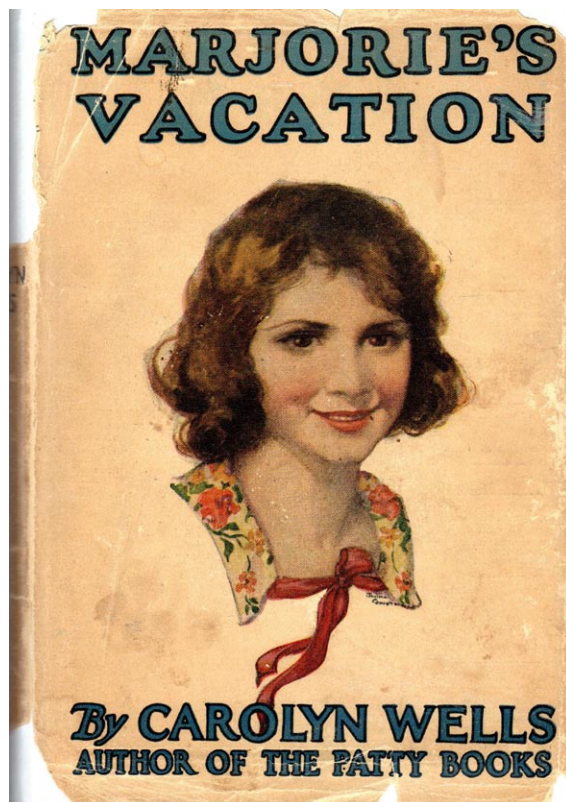
Between 1901 and 1919, Wells wrote seventeen novels in the Patty Fairfield series. In the first book, *Patty Fairfield*, Patty is fourteen years old and living with her father. Her mother has died some months before. By the last book, *Patty and Azalea*, Patty is married and has a small daughter of her own. The series follows the experiences of Patty as she comes of age.

Above right is the first edition of *Patty Fairfield*, showing Patty illustrated in the turn-of-the-century style of Edward C. Caswell. This medallion illustration appeared on many editions in the series.

The Patty books were reprinted many times. Above left is the edition of 1929, with its updated 1920s image of Patty. All seventeen Patty books were issued in a uniform edition with this cover.

**The Patty Fairfield Series**

1. *Patty Fairfield* (1901)
2. *Patty at Home* (1904) (illustrated)
3. *Patty in the City* (1905)
4. *Patty's Summer Days* (1906)
5. *Patty in Paris* (1907) (illustrated)
6. *Patty's Friends* (1908)
7. *Patty's Pleasure Trip* (1909)
8. *Patty's Success* (1910)
9. *Patty's Motor Car* (1911)
10. *Patty's Butterfly Days* (1912)
11. *Patty's Social Season* (1913)
12. *Patty's Suitors* (1914)
13. *Patty's Romance* (1915)
14. *Patty's Fortune* (1916)
15. *Patty Blossom* (1917)
16. *Patty-Bride* (1918)
17. *Patty and Azalea* (1919)

Books of Carolyn Wells, continued**Marjorie's Vacation (Grossett & Dunlap, 1907).**

Between 1907 and 1912, Wells wrote the six novels in the Marjorie Maynard series. It is "girls' fiction" similar to the Patty Fairfield series, with more emphasis on "escapades." The first book, *Marjorie's Vacation*, was dedicated to a child friend in Rahway, New Jersey:

To my little friend, Muriel Dunham Pratt,
this book is lovingly dedicated.

The Marjorie Maynard Series

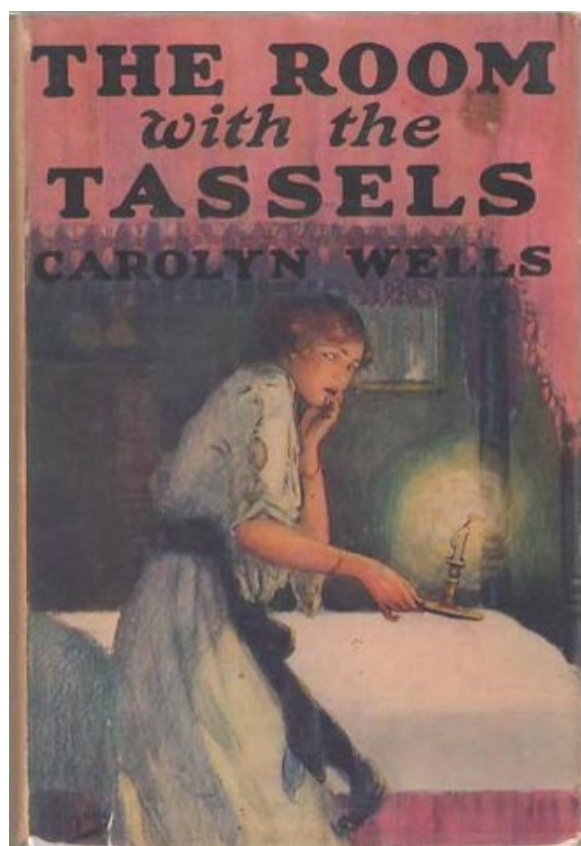
1. *Marjorie's Vacation* (1907)
2. *Marjorie's Busy Days* (1908)
3. *Marjorie's New Friend* (1909)
4. *Marjorie in Command* (1910)
5. *Marjorie's Maytime* (1911)
6. *Marjorie at Seacote* (1912)

The Room with the Tassels (George H. Doran Co., 1918).

Between 1918 and 1923, Wells wrote eight novels in the Pennington Wise series. "Penny" is a con man attracted to solving crimes with a supernatural element. He is accompanied in these efforts by silent movie actress Zizi in a series of novels that are sharp and witty. One commentator noted the maturity in her style since *The Clue*.

The Pennington Wise Series

1. *The Room with the Tassels* (1918)
2. *The Man Who Fell through the Earth* (1919)
3. *In the Onyx Lobby* (1920)
4. *Come Back* (1921)
5. *Luminous Face* (1921)
6. *Vanishing at Betty Varian* (1922)
7. *The Affair at Flower Acres* (1923)
8. *Wheels within Wheels* (1923)

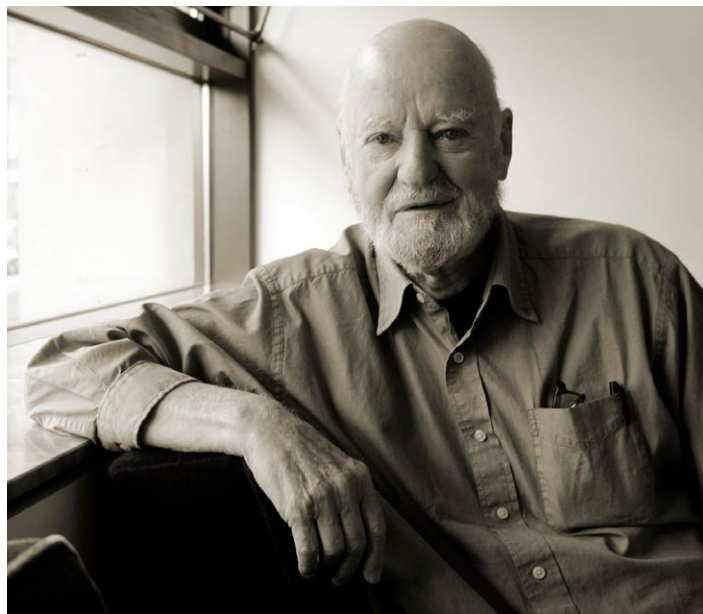


Lawrence Ferlinghetti, 1919–2021

Poet, painter, social activist, and co-founder in 1951 of City Lights Booksellers & Publishers, Lawrence Ferlinghetti died at age 101 in February.

Born in 1919 in Yonkers, New York, Ferlinghetti was a little older than the Beat poets that he would famously promote, publish, and defend in court. Notably, he published Alan Ginsburg's poem *Howl* in 1956. By itself, Ferlinghetti felt that the poem was not long enough to publish on its own, and he asked Ginsburg for a few more poems. As soon as *Howl and Other Poems* was published, Ferlinghetti was arrested on obscenity charges. The case went to court, but the judge found in Ferlinghetti's favor. The poem represented a decisive turning point in Ginsburg's career, in the mainstreaming of the Beat movement, fueling the counterculture that would blossom in the 1960s, and of course placing Ferlinghetti in the spotlight as a champion of freedom of artistic expression. All that in one little book.

City Lights Bookstore became a landmark in San Francisco and has remained a center for new voices through seven decades.

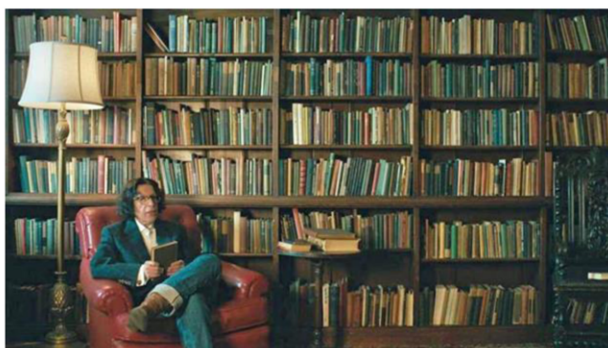


For more about Lawrence Ferlinghetti and his significance, read the article [A Death In The Family: Remembering Lawrence Ferlinghetti \(1919–2021\)](#) by Bruce E. McKinney with Guest Writer Maureen E. Mulvihill, published on Rare Book Hub.



FRAN LEBOWITZ 'I Buy Books, I Read, I Talk'

FRAN LEBOWITZ (MORRISTOWN, NJ, 1950 – ; NEW YORK CITY RESIDENT, 1969 –) is all the chat these days. She has left her first career in writing (*Metropolitan Life*, *Social Studies*, *The Fran Lebowitz Reader*) for a second career as a public celebrity in New York City. Urban wit and amusing social commentary are now her métier: “writing is hard, talking is easy”. In her signature ‘look’ and demeanor, she is a throwback to George Sand and Dorothy Parker. Lebowitz’s bookings as a public speaker showcase her wry, but insightful, comments about city life in the current century, from bookstores and tourists to smart phones and subways. Acerbic, opinionated, and never dull, she is an acquired taste. And stylishly retro! She drives a 1979 Checker cab and abhors Big Tech. Martin Scorsese’s recent documentary, *Pretend It’s A City* (7 episodes) captures Lebowitz in her usual haunts – Strand Bookstore, Argosy Books, NYPL, etc.



Lebowitz at home in New York City, with her library of some 10,000 volumes (*NY Times Book Review*, ‘By The Book’, 3.21.2017; online). And with director, Martin Scorsese, at the New York Public Library. His documentary on Lebowitz, *Pretend It’s A City* (2021) [<trailer>](#), has been popular viewing on Netflix. His first Lebowitz documentary (2010) was *Public Speaking* [<trailer>](#). Images: Permission, Netflix; Permission, *The New Yorker*, Joana Avillez drawing, below ([1.25.2021](#)) <https://www.joanaavillez.com>.



Written and designed by **MAUREEN E. MULVIHILL**, Princeton Research Forum (1992 –) and FBS V.P., 2012–2015.

Her other illustrated webpages for the FBS newsletter include events and new information on Max Beerbohm (Samuels Lasner Collection, DE); Carl Linnaeus; Anne Frank (Sarasota Public Library); *Moby-Dick* Marathon (New Bedford Whaling Museum, MA); Goldstein Library (Ringling College of Art & Design, Sarasota); exhibitions (Ringling Museum of Art, Sarasota; Harn Museum of Art, University of Florida-Gainesville); Literati Club (Ringling Art Library, Sarasota); *et al.* ♦

Finding Edith's Books

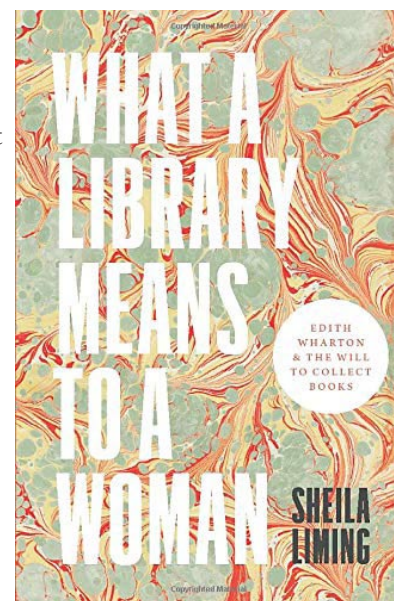
by Terry Seymour

Edith Wharton's Library: A Catalog. Introduction and Catalogue by George Ramsden. Foreword by Hermione Lee. Stone Trough Books, 1999. Limited to 350 numbered copies.

What a Library Means to a Woman: Edith Wharton & the Will to Collect Books. By Sheila Liming. University of Minnesota Press, 2020. Paperback.

A few years ago, I visited the Mount, Edith Wharton's one-time home in Lenox, Mass. Once it is safe to do so, I highly recommend this destination as a great way to spend a summer day. At the time of my visit, the house was still under restoration. (It may still be.) But the library was completely restored and full of Wharton's books. As a connoisseur of library reconstructions, I was eager to learn the whole story of how this library was assembled. Luckily, *Edith Wharton's Library* by George Ramsden told me most of what I wanted to know. Ramsden got his start as a book dealer/collector when he bought a large number of Wharton's books from the British dealer Maggs. Maggs had won the books at auction and offered them only as a collection, not individually. Using this giant purchase in 1984 as a head start, Ramsden began to pursue more Wharton books with a vengeance. His initial goal was to own

the Wharton collection (as Liming observes in her book). As a catalogue, of course, it was instantly out of date because Ramsden kept finding more books. Ramsden was far from a professional cataloguer, and he made other mistakes, although none of them were particularly grave. The book was primarily intended as a vehicle to help market the library to another institution, since the Mount and Ramsden were at a stalemate in 1999.

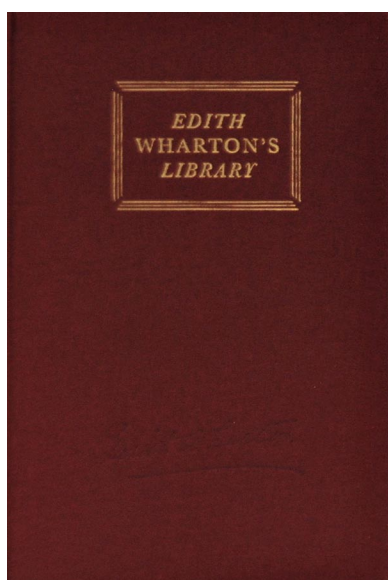


What a Library Means to a Woman was included in the "Books in Brief" section of The Florida Bibliophile for February

In a five-page foreword, Hermione Lee provides more insight and just as much useful Wharton history as Liming does in the 178 pages preceding the "conclusion" of *What a Library Means to a Woman*.

What a Library Means to a Woman is primarily aimed at dedicated fans and students of Edith Wharton's work. I suppose such an audience might appreciate this book. Sheila Liming's writing, however, is wordy and dense. It is often necessary to read her lengthy sentences twice to understand her meaning. Frankly, it is seldom worth the effort.

I once picked up a novel by James Fenimore Cooper. The first sentence was, sadly, also the first paragraph. And it consumed the entire first page. I had to read it three times, only to discover that Cooper is merely introducing two characters and telling us that they are brothers. Cooper did us a huge favor by showing his true colors right up front. No need to read any further as far as I was concerned. Mark



Edith Wharton's Library: A Catalog by George Ramsden was published in 1999 in a limited edition of 350.

the Wharton library himself. At length, he decided to sell the enlarged collection, and specifically targeted the Mount as the best place to house it permanently. He contacted them in the early 1990s about a sale.

Edith Wharton's Library is a very well-made book, informative and rife with high quality images and relevant photographs. Ramsden and the Mount had been haggling over the price of Wharton's library for several years

when this book was printed. Its superb production standards are clearly intended to convey the value of

Finding Edith's Books, concluded

Twain attacked Cooper's prose in typically biting and hilarious fashion, accusing him, among numerous other offenses, as having a poor ear for words. "You perceive what he is intending to say, but you also perceive that he does not say it." Liming speaks to us in academic jargon and strange, lumpy sentences so that often you can't even perceive what she is intending to say.

I quote from Liming's introduction:

But the tendency of New Formalism to misconstrue and thus neglect the methods of historical materialism leaves me feeling all the more insistent about the latter's application to this project, and to object-oriented study more generally.

Just like Cooper, Liming, in her introduction, is considerate enough to discourage us from reading much more.

She quotes heavily and distractingly from other writers, seldom to much effect. Her chapter headings give a preview of what lies in store for the reader:

1. The Library as Space: *Self-Making and Social Endangerment in The Decoration of Houses and Summer*
2. The Library as Hoard: *Collecting and Canonicity in The House of Mirth and Eline Vere*
3. The Library as Network: *Affinity, Exchange, and the Makings of Authorship*
4. The Library as Tomb: *Monuments and Memorials in Wharton's Short Fiction*

At length, the reader is able to discover that Liming dissects many of Wharton's works in support of the thesis implied by each chapter title. In chapter two, she sums up by explaining Wharton's concept of collecting:

For Wharton . . . book collecting amounts to a perceived investment in the precapitalist world of cultural specificity and authenticity, a world that predates Marx and Engel's description

of 'intercourse in any direction' and 'the universal dependence of nations.'

How close is that to your definition?

She clearly spent a great deal of time with Wharton's books. She finds objects in the books such as a four-leaf clover, dried flowers, dog fur, human hair, and Brentano's ads. She gives us the title of most of these books, along with the titles of many books with unopened pages. Stretching credibility, she then draws inferences from such scanty evidence. Wharton did not read pages 14–40 because they were unopened. She did read pages 68–70 because they were opened and slightly smudged. There may be many nuggets buried in Liming's florid four chapters. But after sifting through a few pages of incomprehensible psychobabble, I declined to pan any further for them.

Once she arrives at the Conclusion (which is not a conclusion at all, but rather a separate story), she morphs into a different writer. She employs a direct and vigorous journalistic style, particularly suited to Ramsden's life and activities *vis á vis* the Wharton books. Liming interviewed Ramsden on several occasions, and she describes these meetings vividly. She grew to understand his motivations and fears, and this experience enabled her to make valuable points about the book collecting mentality. In short, I enjoyed reading this conclusion the first time, and I enjoyed even more re-reading it while preparing this article. Taken together with the foreword and Introduction in the Ramsden book, the Liming conclusion completes the story for us.

She follows Ramsden's monomaniacal passion for Wharton, his decline and fall, and the many twists and turns of the Mount finances to their end. Then she seems to remember that she is supposedly writing a "conclusion." This realization causes an unfortunate reversion to form in the last three or four pages.

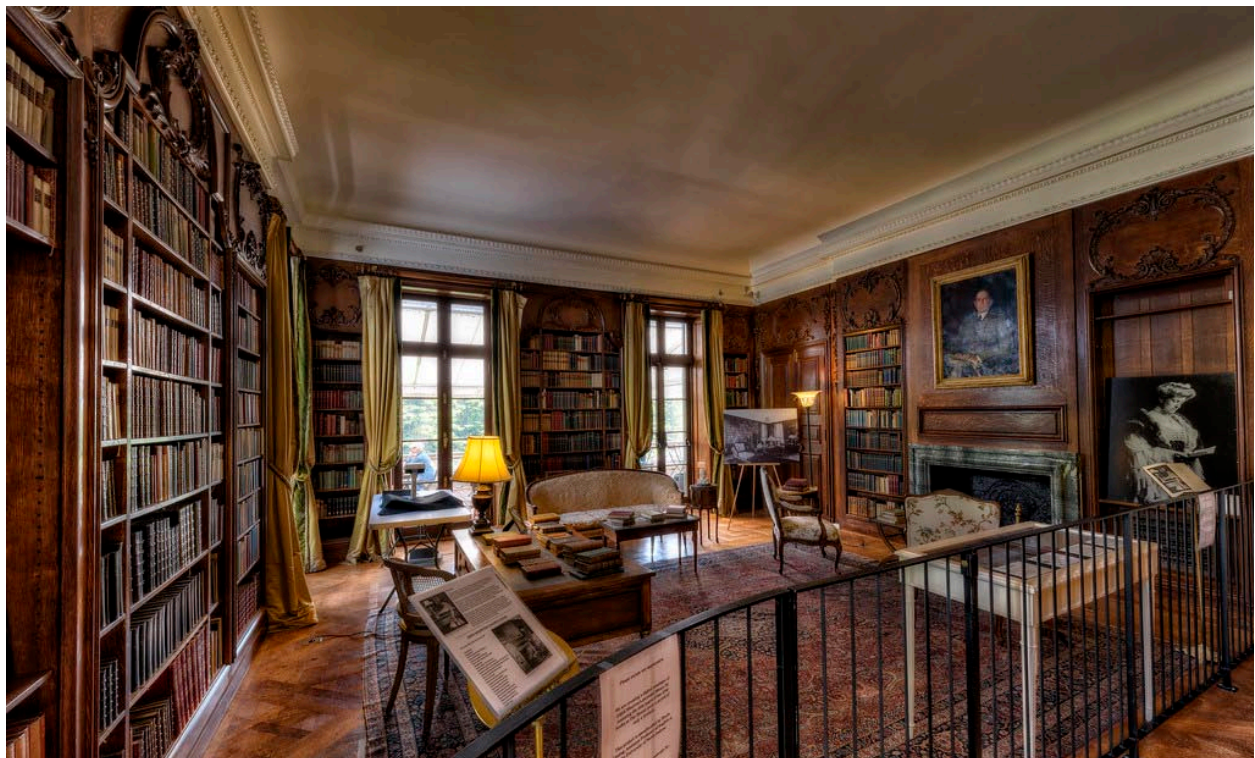
Only a reader who has longed nostalgically for the thicket of tangled sentences in the first four chapters will be glad for this turn of events. Fans of Samuel Johnson's *Rasselas* will now recall his "Conclusion: in which nothing is concluded."



The Mount, Edith Wharton's Home in Lenox, Mass.



Wharton designed the home and grounds based on the principles she had described in her book *The Decoration of Houses* (1898), written with Ogden Codman, Jr., and which references many fine European houses. The Mount was not the only residence Wharton maintained, and she traveled extensively, but she regarded the Mount as her home. She designed it around the library (below), itself designed to hold the few hundred books left to her by her father as well as her own 3,000-book collection.



The Keeper of Edith's Books: George Ramsden

George Ramsden (1953–2019) was educated at Eton and Cambridge and destined for law. At Cambridge, he lived for a year directly above the Samuel Pepys library, but he said, “It never occurred to me to go in.” He was more focused on his music in those days. After completing college and at his father’s direction, George went to London and began to attend law lectures. “Attend” may be a strong word here. After a year, he drifted off to find a job and found a Christmas job at the Heywood Hill bookshop in Mayfair. George started as a clerk, but soon he was being sent out to scout for used books. Wharton was of special interest to the Heywood Hill buyer, and he was delighted when George returned with six of her books. George’s relationship with Edith had begun.

George worked at Heywood Hill for a few years before opening his own shop, Stone Trough Books, in 1981, named for a long-gone family brewery: “It’s an extremely dull name, but I thought I could rise above it.” In 1990, he moved his family and his shop to York, where it has been ever since.

In 1984, he heard the “heartstopping” news that the



well-known antiquarian bookseller Maggs Brothers had acquired Edith Wharton’s library from Colin Clark, godson of Wharton and son of historian Sir Kenneth Clark, to whom Wharton had left the books.

He immediately approached his father and brother about the purchase. As a result, he “wrote a big cheque” – about \$80,000.

In a 2000 interview with Sheila Markham, George said:



This small blue storefront at 53 Walmgate in York, England, was the home of Stone Trough Books for almost 30 years.

Ramsden, concluded

The whole tendency of the book trade is to break up libraries. I'm frustrated by dealers who are only interested in picking out the plums, the big books with auction records. This approach misses the significance of an author's library, where 'humble' items have their own importance taken in context. This is especially true of Edith Wharton whose libraries and books were at the heart of her homes in America and France. As Hermione Lee says in the catalogue, Edith's library provides a key to her intellectual journeys and connects at every point with her writing. Her library is her education, inspiration and workshop. Why are we booksellers if we are not excited by libraries?

Ramsden said that as soon as he opened the boxes of Wharton's books from Maggs Bros., he noticed gaps in the collection based on his knowledge of Wharton. Wharton's books had been shelved among Kenneth Clark's other books, and not all of them found their way to Maggs. George would make many visits to the Clark home to seek additional Wharton books.

To many, he was more a collector and cataloguer than a shop owner. He could hover according to some visitors to his shop, and George said that his most successful sales strategy was often to walk away from the customer.

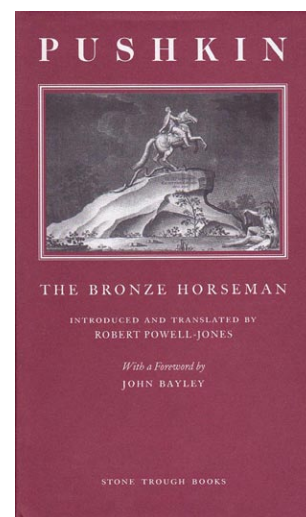
In 2005, after months of negotiation, the Mount purchased the 2,600 books in George's Wharton collection for \$2.6 million. There were comments about the amount, but George liked to remind people that even a modest Impressionist painting would easily command that much at auction.

George insisted on accompanying the collection across the Atlantic and helping to set it up at the Mount. There were tears. The fruits of the greatest quest of his life was being given into the hands of others.

Beyond Wharton's books, George described his collection as "nothing to write home about." He had an interest in calligraphy, association copies, books



Christopher Logue: *A Bibliography 1952–97* (1997), published in an edition of 250, with 35 copies bound in a specially designed cover



The Bronze Horseman (1999) by Alexander Pushkin, translated by Ramsden's friend Robert Powell-Jones

about the English publisher and editor Rupert Hart-Davis, and the early 20th-century poet Siegfried Sassoon's cricket pads.

In addition to his catalog of the Edith Wharton books, George produced several other books, for example, a bibliography of the poet Christopher Logue, a book of Pushkin's work translated by his friend Robert Powell-Jones, and *Bensoniana and Cornishiana*, selections from the notebooks of English author, poet, and essayist A. C. Benson and the eccentric sayings of Mrs. Blanche Warren-Cornish.

Sadly, in 2019, George, who had struggled with depression for many years, took his own life. His obituary appeared in major London papers, the *Independent* and the *Times*. His local paper in York reported in 2020 that Stone Trough Books would be renovated and sold as a two-bedroom house.



Edith in Brief

Edith Wharton (1862–1937) described her origins as middle class, but as Edith Newbold Jones, she was born into the highest echelons of New York society. Her father's family made money in real estate and was very wealthy and socially prominent. On her mother's side, her great-grandfather was Ebenezer Stevens, a Revolutionary War hero and general. Her father's first cousin was Caroline Schermerhorn Astor, who married into the leading real estate family in New York (the Astors) and became the leader of the Four Hundred, the top families in New York. Edith was also related to the Rensselaers, the most prestigious of the families who had received land grants from the former Dutch government of New York and New Jersey. In her writing and life, Wharton would severely critique the upper class she became so familiar with and criticize the importance placed on it. From early years, Wharton strained against a system that would attempt to govern every aspect of her life as it groomed her for a good marriage and a proper place in New York society.

She spent much of her childhood in Europe. Her family lived in France, Italy, Germany, and Spain from 1866 to 1872. The family returned to New York City in 1872. They divided their time between New York in the winter and Newport, Rhode



Edith Wharton writing at her desk. She tended to write in bed, balancing a lap desk, an ink pot, and a Pekingese.

Island, in the summer.

It is said that Wharton loved books from an early age, and even before she could read she would sit with a book and turn its pages, even if the book was upside down. She would entertain her family with stories that she invented, using a book as a prop to pretend she was reading it. She began to write poetry and stories as a young girl and attempted her first novel at age 11. Her mother, however, was very opposed to her young daughter reading fiction – often regarded as unwholesome and a waste of



Edith Wharton was born in a five-story brownstone at 14 W 23rd Street in New York City. Then, it was a stylish residence (left photo; righthand building); today, it is nestled among other workaday buildings, with a Starbucks on the ground floor (right photo; center building).

Edith in Brief, concluded

time — and forbade her to read it, much less publish it. This was one example of the difficult relationship Edith had with her mother, whom she would portray in stark terms in her fiction. Nevertheless, Edith said that she abided by this restriction: “I read everything but novels until the day of my marriage.”

Wharton often deprecated her “precociousness,” but clearly, she was a very intelligent youth who saw — or wanted to see — beyond her circumstances. She would have liked more education, but it was not part of her mother’s plan for her. She was forbidden to read novels, and any book containing slang, such as the work of Mark Twain, was forbidden in the Wharton household. Her father’s library became a haven for Edith and a source of the larger view she was seeking. His books and hers, as she accumulated them, would follow her throughout her life.

Wharton’s first publication was the translation of a German poem. Her family prohibited the use of her name because writing was not a proper occupation for a woman. She completed her first novel, *Fast and Loose*, at age 15. It was written “for an older friend” as an imitation and satire of the British romantic novels that young women of her era read in secret. It’s style was immature, and she never intended it for publication, and indeed, it was not published until 1977, one hundred years after she wrote it. Nevertheless, it employs themes that would occur in her mature work, notably women trapped by their social position. Ironically, her means, which should have provided the opportunity to pursue her dreams, also came with social shackles that prevented such a pursuit.

From 1880 to 1890, Wharton wrote little, focusing instead on the social rituals of her class, leading up to her debut in 1879. That year, she began to court Henry Leyden Stevens, son of a wealthy real estate family, and wealthy in his own right. The Whartons did not approve of this choice, but the courtship was interrupted when the Whartons went to southern France in 1881 for her father’s health. He died there the following year. Edith and her mother returned to the U.S., and Edith became

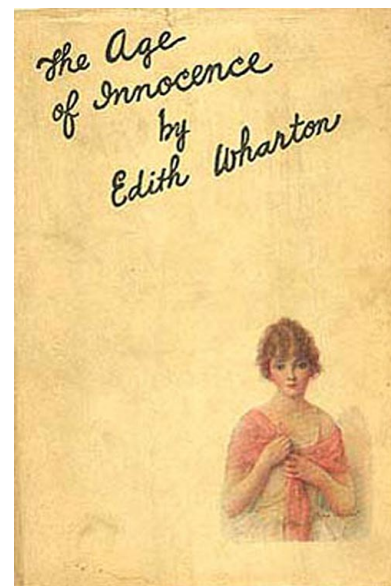
engaged to Henry. However, in the month they were to marry, the engagement was broken off. This was likely due to Stevens’s mother’s opposition to the marriage, but publicly, it was attributed by the scandal sheet *Town Topics* to the bride’s “alleged preponderance of intellectuality.”

In 1885, Edith married Edward Wharton, “Teddy,” a Bostonian of her class who loved sports and travel.

However, within a few years, Edward’s bouts with depression became more severe. Edward’s father had the same ailment, which had led to his suicide in 1891. The couple traveled much less and settled at the Mount, their home in Lenox, Massachusetts, designed by Edith and built in 1902.

By 1908, Edward’s condition was considered incurable. It had taken a toll on Edith as well. In that same year, she met Morton Fullerton, a journalist for the *Times* (London), and they began an affair. Fullerton was the intellectual partner Edith needed, and in 1913, she and Edward were divorced.

Up to the late 1890s, Wharton had published the occasional story or book of poems, but she became more dedicated to her writing as the new century neared. In the 40 years between the publication of *The Decoration of Houses* in 1897 and her death in 1937, she would produce over 40 novels, short story collections, books of poetry, and nonfiction books. In 1921, she became the first woman to win the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction, for *The Age of Innocence*.



For The Age of Innocence (1920), Wharton became the first woman to receive the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction. It was adapted for film in 1924, 1933, and 1993 and for the stage in 1928 and 1988.

The Florida Bibliophile Society
extends warm wishes to our Irish and American-Irish colleagues
who have contributed to the history and longevity of the book.

St Patrick's Day, March 17
honors writers, scholars, teachers, students, collectors, printers, publishers,
booksellers, actors, and visual artists associated with the Emerald Isle
and her proud pantheon of writers.



Folio 129v, Four Evangelists, **The Book of Kells**. 8th Century A.D. Trinity College Dublin. 340 folios (680 leaves) on vellum (calfskin), 4 vols. (1953 binding). 330 x 250 mm. In Latin. Though primarily a religious illuminated manuscript of the Four Gospels, **The Book of Kells** is an iconic treasure in Western literature and a fine example of medieval Celtic book design & the visual arts (Christian symbolism / Celtic motifs). Why, 'tis so lavish & extraordinary, some fancy it the work of angels. < [Video](#), Exhibition of TCD MS 58 >

Contributed by Maureen E. Mulvihill & Charles M. Brown.

The Future of the Irish Typewriter

The Irish language has a long history as one of the many Celtic languages that were spoken in the British Isles and nearby areas on the European continents. Today, four Celtic languages remain: Irish, Welsh, Scottish Gaelic, and Breton.

Two thousand years ago, there were many Celtic languages. They were the primary languages across most of Western Europe down to the Mediterranean. Roman conquest began the process of marginalization of these languages, forcing them into more remote reaches beyond the control of Rome. As the Romance languages developed, they became institutionalized in law and commerce, continuing the displacement of native Celtic languages.

At the same time, England was subject to several waves of conquest by Romans, Germans, Vikings, French, and the Danes, each one introducing new languages, and England began the process of asserting its control over the British Isles. Thus, the centrality of Celtic languages to Celtic cultures was further reduced.

The first official act on the part of the English government to suppress Irish was passed in 1367. This is the time of Chaucer's language, a late version of Middle English. The act made it illegal for English colonists in Ireland to speak Irish or for native Irish to speak their language when interacting with the colonists. In the following centuries, notable acts further reduced the venues in which Irish was acceptable. In the 1500s, Irish was prohibited in the *Irish* parliament. In the 1700s, Irish was prohibited in law courts and legal documents.

This position only began to be reversed in the late 1800s, which saw the beginnings of the revival of the Irish and other Celtic languages. It was spurred in part by the 1882 conviction for murder of several Irish men who spoke little or no English and whose pleas could not be accepted in court. One was then hanged for the crime. This event took place after the Irish famine, seven years during which potato blight destroyed Ireland's main staple crop. Food aid was largely denied, and continued export of other Irish grain crops was enforced. As a result, a million Irish



This is the keyboard of a Royal typewriter adapted for the Gaelic alphabet in which Irish is written. These typewriters were used in offices until the mid-20th century when they were largely phased out in favor of English.

Sources: *Irish Times*; history.com; *The Irish Story*; quora.com

Irish Typewriter, continued

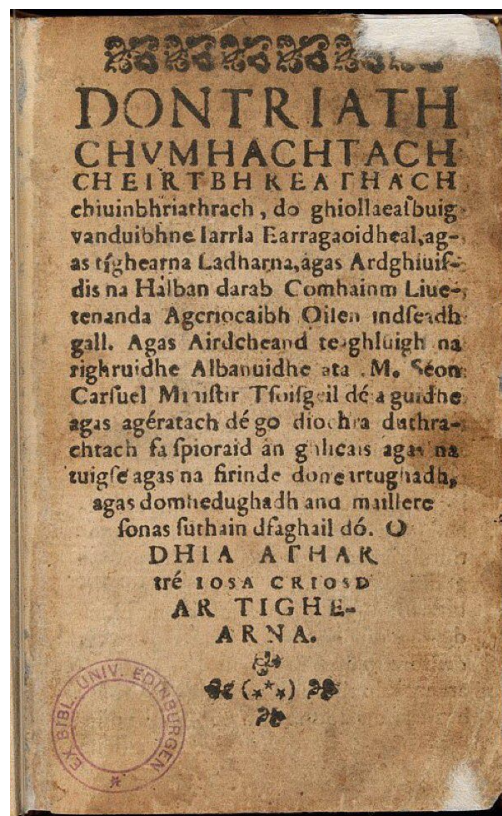
died and another two million emigrated, draining Ireland of many of its native speakers.

On the other side of the Atlantic, Irish became a tool for political demagogues and Protestant proselytes. The former decried the immigrants being “dumped” on America for their “bad nature” and their foreign religion (Catholicism) that was viewed as antithetical to the foundations of the American republic. The latter printed language primers and prayer books in Irish to ease the immigrants’ transition into their new homeland and attract them to Protestant churches, but it did little to preserve the Irish language.

By the early to mid-1800s, Irish was spoken only in isolated areas of Ireland and concern for the fate of Irish language, culture, and identity initiated a preservation movement. The Ulster Gaelic Society was founded in 1830 and was the first of several groups and efforts formed throughout the 19th century to preserve and then revive use of the Irish language. These included the Archaeological Society (founded 1840), publication of the Ossianic Cycle (beginning 1850), the Society for the Preservation of the Irish Language (founded 1877), and the Gaelic Union (founded 1880). This led up to the 1892 call by Douglas Hyde in a speech before the National Literary Society of Dublin entitled “The Necessity for De-Anglicising Ireland.” The way back to Irish identity was through language.

Publications in Irish like *The Gaelic Journal*, published by the Gaelic Union, helped to spread the work and reintroduce Irish as a vital language of commerce and literature. These efforts increase in the 20th century, fueled by Ireland’s partition in the early 1920s and its continuing struggle with British government.

In the Republic of Ireland, the legal status of Irish faced no barriers, but in Northern Ireland, official recognition remained out of reach. As an example, a Belfast resident made an application for a liquor license in 2006. It was refused because it was not in English as it had to be according to the 1737 Administration of Justice Act. An appeal also failed despite the judge’s awareness that an application in



Aibidil Gaoidheilge agus Caiticíosma (“Irish Alphabet and Catechism”), published in 1571, was the first book printed in Ireland in the Irish language. Part Irish primer, part prayer book, this was part of an effort by Irish Protestants to print the Bible in the Irish language, the language of the common person. Only three copies of this book are known; this one is in the library at the University of Edinburgh.

Welsh would be accepted in a Welsh court and an application in Scottish Gaelic would be accepted in a Scottish court.

While the Irish language faces no legal barriers in Ireland, the number of speakers and readers appears to remain low, estimated between 2% and 6%. Survey respondents at levels up to 25% have claimed that they can read Irish, but follow-up studies indicate that this indicates enthusiasm for the Irish language, not language skills. Still, among Irish, Welsh, Scottish Gaelic, and Breton, Irish retains the strongest position. Irish is taught in school, including schools where the primary language is Irish. There are Irish TV and radio stations. All road signage and many official documents are bi-lingual. Adult education classes in the Irish language are well attended. There is indeed enthusiasm for Irish.

The future of the Irish typewriter? Your best bet is to watch eBay for one of the vintage models described on the previous page.



irisleabhar na gaeòilge.

THE GAELIC JOURNAL:

EXCLUSIVELY DEVOTED TO THE PRESERVATION AND CULTIVATION OF THE IRISH LANGUAGE.

FOUNDED, CONDUCTED AND PUBLISHED BY THE GAELIC UNION.

No. I.—VOL. I.]

DUBLIN, NOVEMBER, 1882.

[PRICE SIXPENCE.

an gaeòilge ms an naomhò dois deus.

1r doir iongantur an doir ro: atáro uallaiḡe aḡ a o-tarpuing ar bóitrib, aḡur talam aḡ a tpeabao, le bpiḡib teime aḡur uirḡe; aḡur ar muiḡ atáro loingear san pui an t-peoil aḡ imteact “1 n-aḡarò na tuile ‘r i ḡ-coinne na taoroe,” aḡur i ḡ-coinne na ḡaoite mar an ḡ-céaona. 1r péoiri teactaieact i ḡḡubinn oo éur timcioll na cpiunne aḡur aḡur i ḡ-ceatpama uaipe an élois: aḡur iḡ péoiri le beiric caint oo uéanao le céile aḡur leiteao baile móir eaoorria. Oéantari ionhaiḡe oo uéalbaò le ḡaeḡib na ḡpéme a pmeioe púl, aḡur poillpḡḡeap bailte móia le polur electpaeac: aḡur mar pin oo éao niò eile; atáro piao aḡ a n-uéanao i móo oo meaparo a beir ‘na oḡaoiḡeact tamall a éur. Aḡur ní b aḡur iḡ ḡo b-puil ealaona nuaò aḡ a ḡ-cumaò, aḡur neite

The Gaelic Journal (Irisleabhar na Gaedhilge), published from 1882 to 1909, was “exclusively devoted to the preservation and cultivation of the Irish Language”. It contained articles in Irish, English, French, Scottish Gaelic, and Welsh in a variety of genres, including “folktales, literary texts, poetry, historical studies, fiction, drama, and both academic and topical articles. It has been described as “the first important bilingual Irish periodical.”

nu aḡt pór atá an pḡunne aḡ a noctaò i o-taoib neiteao omie ro. Oo paoileao ‘pam ḡur an doir ro ḡo m-buo an ḡaeḡilḡ, aḡt iḡ eol oo ḡac peari leiḡin anoir aca le céile. 1r pior, mar an ḡ-céaona, oo ḡac ol ár o-teangan-ne oo’n laorion, oo’n ḡpḡeip, oo’n ne, na pḡance, na Spáinne, na h-ooáile aḡur na ḡaeḡilḡ an bḡeactair aḡur teanga na bḡeactainne ḡ naḡ i an caint céaona a tá aḡamni pém aḡur aḡ oo oo bi eḡeannaiḡe mar ro a n-ambpior i o-taoib a ḡḡie oo éuḡ cúir maḡa púta oo luco leiḡin, aḡt ó ḡaoil oo na teangḡaib eile úo oo méaoiḡ meap na puil mópán oioḡ anoir i o-tioḡaib coisḡiḡe aḡ a oóis ollamain na pḡance, na ḡeapmáine aḡur na pḡan ḡ-cpiunne—a beir aḡ pógluim na teangan ar a ḡ o’ari ab teanga oíir i. Ní puiur an teanga ro na oo’n muintiri ná’i éualarò pocal oí aḡamni ó beul le págail aḡ muintiri na ḡ-cpioc úo a oúbriao ‘na pin, a b-puil piao aḡ caiteam a n-amḡḡie le tean-an móir-ionmiiur a tá i o-teangam aḡur i b-pógluim o an ouaiḡ ro oḡia pém. Atá meap éom móir pin mupair lánm-peioḡta a tá aḡamne, ḡo o-tis mópán oioḡ ḡo h-éipunn aḡ pógluim ḡaeḡilḡe nuair ḡeibro piao faili air a n-ait oul ar

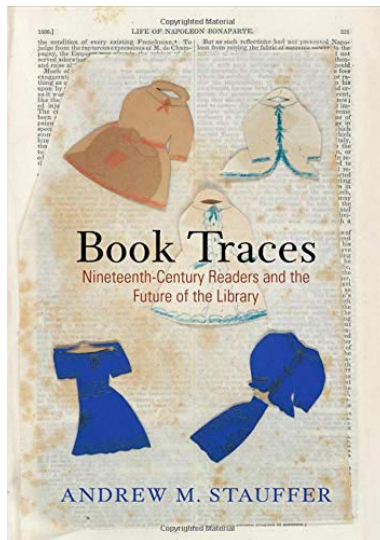
Books in Brief

Book Traces: Nineteenth-Century Readers and the Future of the Library

Andrew M. Stauffer

Univ. of Pennsylvania Press

288 pp., February 2021



Budget and space crunches have pressured libraries to eliminate books. At most risk are books from 1800 to the mid 1920s. Books before 1800 go to Special Collections. Books after 1923 (not yet in public domain) remain in general circulation. Increasingly, books from 1800–1923 are being moved out in favor of digital access through

projects like Google Books. Duplicate physical copies are often eliminated under the assumption that all copies of a given edition are the same, but on closer examination, this is often untrue.

Many 19th-century books bear traces of those who owned and used them. In *Book Traces*, Stauffer shows how his tactic of “guided serendipity” helps him read 19th-century poetry through the clues and objects earlier readers left in their books. He also defends the value of keeping the physical volumes on the shelves. Finding in such books of poetry the inscriptions, annotations, and insertions made by their original owners, and using them as exemplary case studies, Stauffer shows how the physical, historical book enables a modern reader to encounter poetry through the eyes of someone for whom it was personal.

Visit Stauffer’s [Book Traces website](#).

Andrew M. Stauffer is a professor in the English Department at the University of Virginia and a specialist in nineteenth-century literature, especially poetry.



Sources: Univ. of Penn. Press; Univ. of Virginia

Magazines and the American Experience: Highlights from the Collection of Steven Lomazow, M.D.

Steven Lomazow

Grolier Club, 325 pp., 2021

“Steven Lomazow undoubtedly holds the finest collection of American magazines in private hands.”

With these words, curator Gretchen Adkins opened the Grolier Club exhibition, which presents a sample of the 80,000 magazines in Steven Lomazow’s collection. *Magazines and the American Experience* is the catalog of that exhibition, on show at the Grolier Club from January 19 to April 24, 2021.

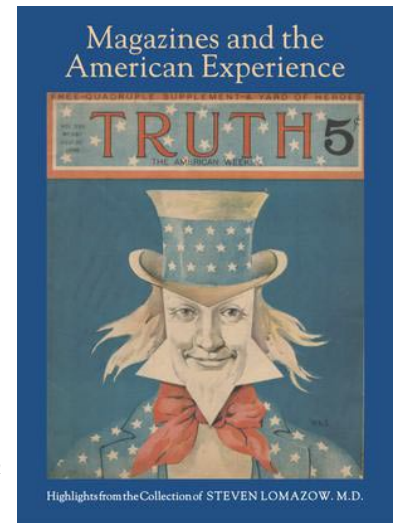
Lavishly illustrated with 435 color illustrations, the catalogue takes the reader on a chronological tour of the American magazine from 1733 to the present. This is followed by chapters examining specialty magazines, including sports, literature, and pulp, among others. For example, the section that chronicles magazines written by and for African Americans begins with David Ruggles’s *Mirror of History* (1838) and includes Frederick Douglass’s *Monthly* (1859), the combative *Messenger* (1917), the *Negro Digest* (1942), and *Essence* (1970). Introductions to each section provide valuable context, and the bibliography and essays by experts in the genre increase this fascinating catalogue’s value for collectors and scholars.

Visit Lomazow’s website, [The Great American Magazine](#).

View the [virtual exhibition opening](#).

Dr. Steven Lomazow is a neurologist with a practice in New Jersey. He is also a historian, a professor, and an avid collector.

Source: ABAA; Grolier Club of New York

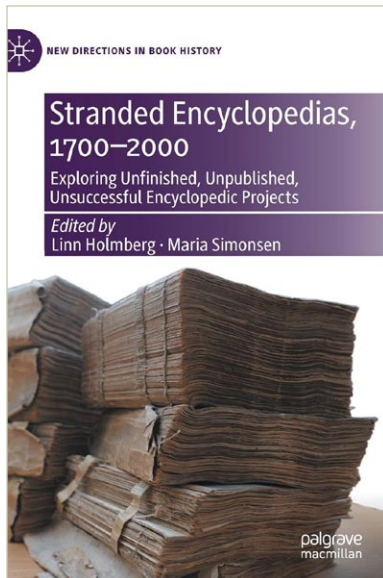


*Books in Brief, continued***Stranded Encyclopedias, 1700–2000: Exploring Unfinished, Unpublished, Unsuccessful Encyclopedic Projects**

Linn Holmberg and Maria Simonsen (eds.)

Palgrave Macmillan

350 pp., February 2021



In *Stranded Encyclopedias*, 1700–2000, fourteen scholars look past the success stories and famous compilers to explore encyclopedic enterprises that somehow failed.

Covering script, print, and digital cultures, the volume highlights the many challenges facing those who have pursued complete knowledge since 1700. Through the

concept of strandedness, an analytical framework is created for approaching aspects often overlooked in histories of encyclopedias, books, and learning: the unpublished, the unfinished, the incomplete, the unsuccessfully disseminated, and the no-longer-updated. By examining these aspects in a new and original way, this book will be of value to anyone interested in the history of encyclopedism and lexicography, the history of knowledge, language, and ideas, and the history of books, writing, translating, and publishing.

Linn Holmberg is a fellow at the Swedish Collegium for Advanced Study in Uppsala, Sweden, and a researcher and teacher in History of Science and Ideas at Stockholm University, Sweden. She is the author of *The Forgotten Encyclopedia* (2014) and *The Maurists' Unfinished Encyclopedia* (2017).

Maria Simonsen is a researcher and teacher in Book History and History of Knowledge at Aalborg University, Denmark. She is the author of the award-winning *Den skandinaviske encyklopædi* (2016).

Sources: Palgrave Macmillan

Lost in Thought: The Hidden Pleasures of an Intellectual Life

Zena Hitz

Princeton Univ. Press

240 pp., May 2020

In an overloaded, superficial, technological world, in which so much is judged by its usefulness, where can we turn for escape, lasting pleasure, contemplation, or connection to others?

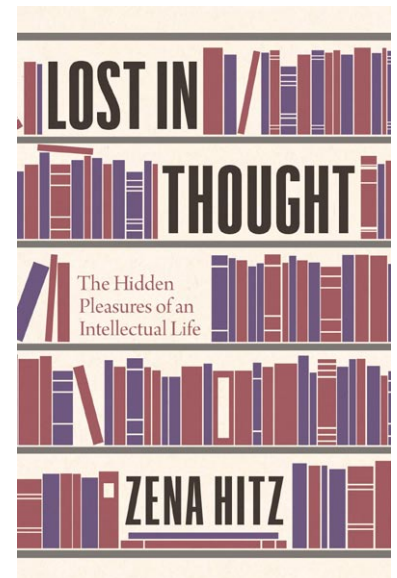
Zena Hitz writes that among many rewarding leisure pursuits, few are so fulfilling as the inner life, whether bookworm, amateur astronomer,

birdwatcher, or someone who takes a deep interest in one of countless other subjects. Drawing on inspiring examples, from Socrates and Augustine to Malcolm X and Elena Ferrante, and from films to Hitz's own experiences as someone who walked away from elite university life in search of greater fulfillment, *Lost in Thought* is a passionate and timely reminder that a rich life is a life rich in thought.

Today, when even the humanities are often defended only for their economic or political usefulness, Hitz says our intellectual lives are valuable not despite but because of their practical uselessness. And while anyone can have an intellectual life, she encourages academics in particular to get back in touch with the desire to learn for its own sake, and calls on universities to return to the person-to-person transmission of the habits of mind and heart that bring out the best in us.

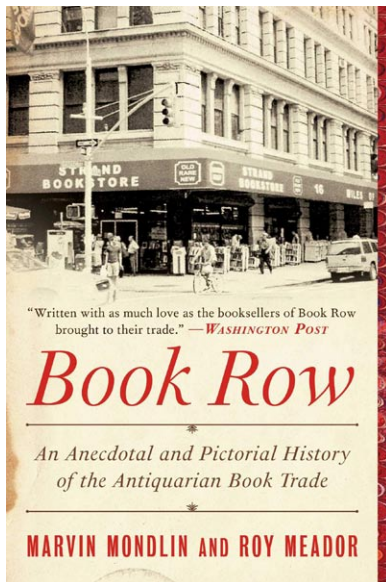
Zena Hitz is a scholar in philosophy who teaches at St. John's College in Annapolis. Her writing and news are collected on her [personal website](https://zenahitz.net).

Sources: Princeton Univ. Press; zenahitz.net



*Books in Brief, concluded***Book Row: An Anecdotal and Pictorial History of the Antiquarian Book Trade**

Marvin Mondlin and Roy Meador
Skyhorse Publishing
456 pp., May 2020




For almost 100 years, the six blocks of Manhattan's Fourth Avenue was a street of book shops, mostly used and rare – Book Row. This street of shops is richly remembered through historical photographs and the rags-to-riches tale of the Strand, which started as a book stall on Eighth Street and today houses 2.5 million volumes. The cast of this story is legendary

and colorful: the horse-betting, poker-playing, go-getter of a book dealer George D. Smith; the irascible Russian-born book hunter Peter Stammer; the visionary Theodore C. Schulte; Lou Cohen, founder of the still-surviving Argosy Book Store; and gentleman bookseller George Rubinowitz and his formidably shrewd wife, Jenny.

Book Row remembers places that all lovers of books should never forget, like Biblo & Tannen, the shop that defied book-banning laws; the Green Book Shop, favored by John Dickson Carr; Ellenor Lowenstein's world-renowned gastronomical Corner Book Shop; and the Abbey Bookshop, the last of the Fourth Avenue bookstores to close its doors.

Marvin Mondlin (1927–2020) began as a stock boy in the book trade in 1951 and rose to serve as estate book buyer for the Strand over 35 years.

Roy Meador (1930–2007) was a book collector and freelance writer. His work was published in the *New York Times*, the *Chicago Tribune*, *Smithsonian*, and *Analog*. He lived in Ann Arbor, Michigan. 

Sources: Simon & Schuster; untapped cities.com

The Jefferson Bible: A Biography

Peter Manseau
Princeton Univ. Press
236 pp., October 2020

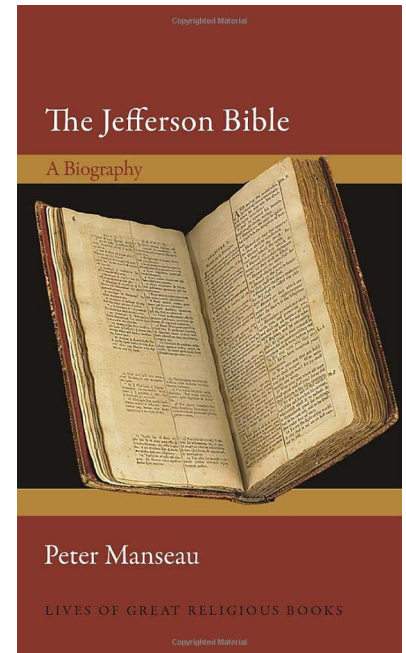
In his retirement, Thomas Jefferson edited the New Testament with a penknife and glue, hoping to reconcile Christian tradition with reason by presenting Jesus as a great moral teacher, not a divine one.

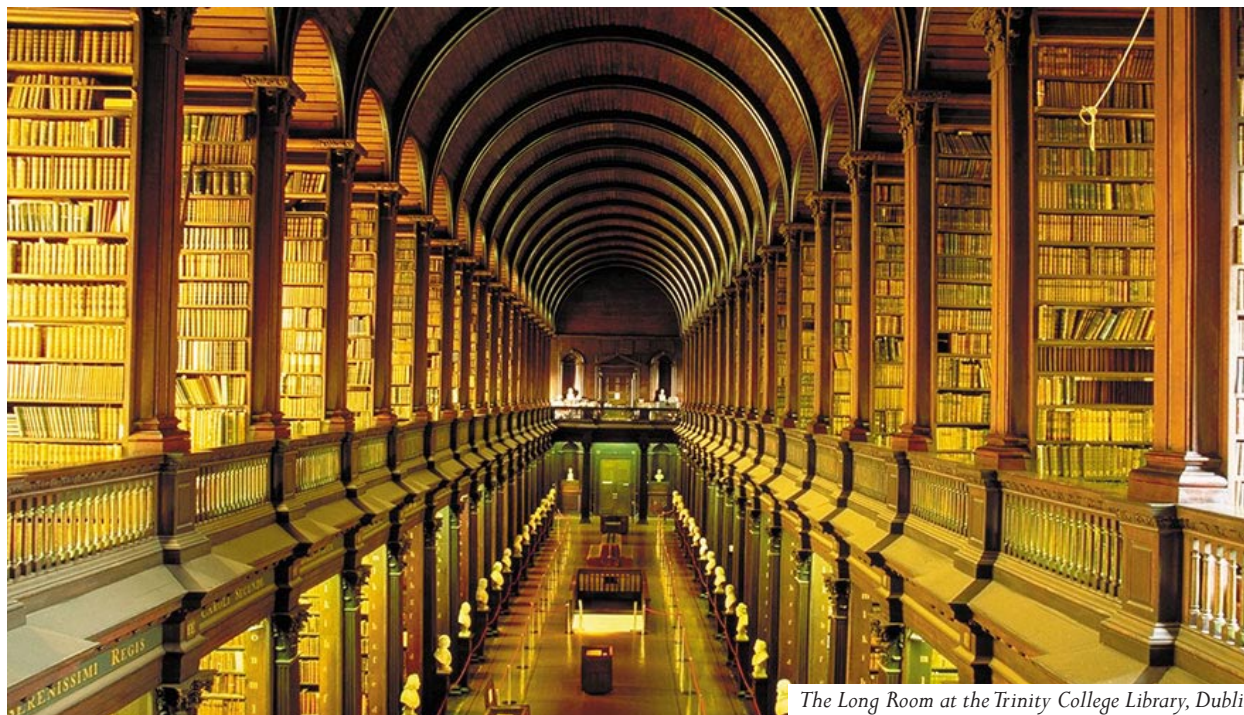
Completed in 1820, *The Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazareth Extracted Textually from the Gospels in Greek, Latin, French & English* was duplicated for a few friends and then disappeared. The

Smithsonian Institution purchased a copy in 1895. Manseau explains Jefferson's personal religion and philosophy, shedding light on the influences and ideas that inspired him to radically revise the Gospels. He situates the creation of the Jefferson Bible within the broader search for the historical Jesus, and examines the book's role in American religious disputes over the interpretation of scripture. Manseau describes the intrigue surrounding the loss and rediscovery of the Jefferson Bible, and traces its remarkable reception history from its first planned printing in 1904 for members of Congress to its persistent power to provoke and enlighten us today.

Peter Manseau, Ph.D., is the Curator of American Religious History at the Smithsonian Institution. He is the author of several books on religion in American life, including *One Nation Under Gods* (2015).

Source: Princeton Univ. Press; Amazon






The Long Room at the Trinity College Library, Dublin



This Month's Writers and Contributors

Many thanks to those who contributed words,
pictures, and ideas to this month's newsletter!

David Hall
Jerry Morris
Linda Morris
Maureen E. Mulvihill
Carl Mario Nudi
Terry Seymour
Gary Simons
Ben Wiley


Have an idea for an article for *The Florida Bibliophile*?
Contact Charles Brown, cbrown@atlantic.net, to
submit or for assistance in preparing your article. 

Join FBS!

If you love books, take your interest to the
next level by joining a group of dedicated
book lovers (i.e., bibliophiles). You will
meet serious collectors, dealers, scholars,
and readers, and you will discover a lively,
enjoyable group. You will find contact emails on the
last page of this newsletter.




Membership is \$50 per year. You can find a
membership form on our website. It will give you
the address to which to send your filled-out form and
payment.

Joining FBS also makes you a member of our national
organization, the Fellowship of American Bibliophilic
Societies. 

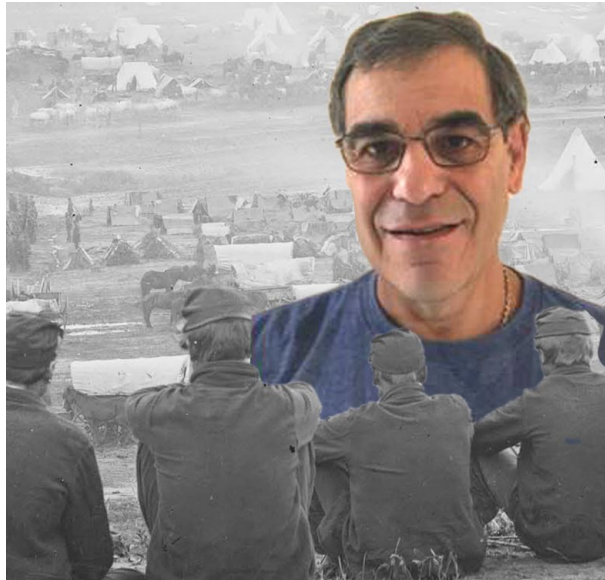
Write for Your Newsletter!



Your input and content are needed. FBS is about
participation, about discoveries, about passionate
interests, and sometimes the deliciously obscure.
Why not write about it!? 

Upcoming Events

March 2021



Eric Steckler: The Jews in the American Civil War

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

March 21, 2021, 1:30 p.m.

Dr. Eric Steckler is a retired medical doctor and Jewish history scholar. In his presentation, Eric will discuss the fascinating role of Jews in the Civil War, their views on slavery and their divided loyalty between the Union and the Confederacy.

In 1861, 150,000 Jews were living in the U.S., mostly immigrants and mostly in the Union, with about 25,000 Jews in the Confederacy. Before the war, Jews were generally reserved on the question of slavery, but the Civil War compelled many Jews to take a position. As many as 10,000 Jews fought in the Civil War, some rising to significant positions, such as Judah P. Benjamin, who served the Confederacy as attorney general, secretary of state, and secretary of war. Noncombatant Jews were as engaged as other Americans in supporting their forces through gifts, contributions, medical aid, clothing, and more.

April 2021



Lola Haskins, Poet

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

April 18, 2021, 1:30 p.m.

Returning to FBS for National Poetry Month is award-winning Florida poet Lola Haskins, featuring poems from her latest collection, *Asylum: Improvisations on John Clare*.

In 1841, the English poet John Clare broke out of the asylum in High Beach, Essex, and walked almost 100 miles to his home village of Helpston. Lola Haskins has taken Clare's circumstance and journey as a framework for the poems in her latest collection, *Asylum: Improvisations on John Clare*, published in 2019 in the prestigious University of Pittsburgh Poetry Series. In addition to new poems, *Asylum* collects poems that Haskins has written throughout her career that had not yet found a home. Altogether, the new collection retraces both John Clare's journey and Haskins's own, or as she might say, her series of journeys.

Book Events, Podcasts, and More

Know of any events of interest to book lovers? Send corrections and additions to Charles Brown, cmbrown@atlantic.net.

Florida Book Events – March 2021

March 1–13 (virtual)

Southwest Florida Reading Festival

The Largest One-Day Reading Festival in Florida
Fort Myers, FL (www.readfest.org/)

March 4–25

BookMania! (est. 1994)

Jensen Beach, FL (<https://www.libraryfoundationmc.org/programs-/bookmania-festival/>)

March 19–20

Palm Beach Book Festival

West Palm Beach, FL (<http://www.palmbeachbookfestival.com/>)

Cancelled Events or No Information Available:

Venice Book Fair and Writers Festival

Venice, FL (<http://venicebookfair.com/>)

Univ. of Florida Conference on Comics and Graphic Novels, Gainesville, FL (est. 2002)

(www.english.ufl.edu/comics/conference.shtml)

Behind the Bookshelves, the AbeBooks Podcast

[Behind the Bookshelves](#) offers interviews with authors, collectors, and booksellers covering a wide range of topics. Recent episodes include:

Jan. 27 – *The Mystery of Mrs. Christie*: In 1926, Agatha Christie disappeared for 11 days. In her book, Marie Benedict imagines the disappearance and the events leading up to it.

Feb. 1 – *100 Books Challenge*: Several years ago, AbeBooks created a reading list called 100 (Fiction) Books to Read in a Lifetime. We are joined by Monica MacMillan, who is attempting to read every book on the list.

Feb. 18 – *Bookishness*: Jessica Pressman, associate professor of English and comparative literature at San Diego State University and author of *Bookishness: Loving Books in a Digital Age*, explains how bookishness is represented in 21st century culture and how print is loved while surrounded by digital media.

Rare Book Cafe, with Steven and Edie Eisenstein

Florida book dealers and FBS members Steve and Edie Eisenstein started “Rare Book Cafe” several years ago to cover all aspects of books in “the only live-streamed program about antiquarian books, ephemera, and more....” Episodes are available to view on the [Rare Book Cafe website \(on Facebook\)](#).

Ed Markiewicz and Lee Linn opened the Feb. 20 show with Sherif Afifi, head of the conservation unit at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina in Egypt; Gigi Best joined the opening segment to read from poet Sonya Sanchez; 16:17 – Ed’s remarks about Allen Ginsburg’s *Howl*; 18:22 – Things Found in Books with David Hess; 24:30 – Sherif Afifi presentation “Handling Archival Materials”; 62:15 – Welcome to viewers; 62:25 – Lin Thomson: “When Government Acts as Book Critic, Pt. 2”; 85:10 – Lee Linn: Highlighting Manuscript Cookbooks from the 17th and 18th centuries.

The BiblioFile, with Nigel Beale

[THE BIBLIOFILE](#) is one of the world’s leading podcasts about “the book” and the wider world of book culture. Hosted by Nigel Beale, it features wide-ranging conversations with authors, poets, publishers, booksellers, editors, collectors, book makers, scholars, critics, designers, publicists, literary agents, and others who just plain love books. The website provides podcasts going back to 2006, lists of reading, links, etc.

Recent episodes:

Jan. 27 – Jonathan A. Hill on the importance of bookseller catalogues

Feb. 13 – Mary Newberry on the Joys of Indexing. Yes, Indexing.

Feb. 20 – Dan Mozersky on how to build a successful chain of bookstores

Feb. 25 – Richard Ovenden on the fragility and importance of libraries.

*Book Events, Podcasts, and More, concluded***American Antiquarian Society
Virtual Book Talks**

Founded in 1812 by Isaiah Thomas, a Revolutionary War patriot and printer, the American Antiquarian Society is the oldest history society in the U.S. It limits its interests to the period before 1876 and holds the “largest and most accessible collection of books, pamphlets, broadsides, newspapers, periodicals, music, and graphic arts material” printed up to that date.

The AAS’s Program in the History of the Book in American Culture (PHBAC) was established in 1983, responding to and promoting the then emerging field of book history. PHBAC sponsors **Virtual Book Talk**, which showcases “authors of recently published scholarly monographs, digital-equivalents, and creative works broadly related to book history and print culture.” Virtual Book Talk is free, but advance registration is required. Past talks are archived on the PHBAC website.

*From February:***Feb. 25, 2021 – Craig Dworkin. Radium of the Word: A Poetics of Materiality.**

Dworkin examines the forms of words rather than their denotations to trace hidden networks across the surface of texts, examining how typography, and even individual letters and marks of punctuation, can reveal patterns that are significant without being symbolic and revealing otherwise unseen meanings.

*Coming in March:***Mar. 25, 2021, 2 p.m. – Lucas Dietrich. Writing Across the Color Line: U.S. Print Culture and the Rise of Ethnic Literature, 1877–1920.**

Dietrich examines interactions between U.S. writers of color and the predominantly white publishing trade at the turn of the twentieth century. The book considers how a constellation of ethnic authors sought commercial publication as a means to influence a national audience.

The Book Collector Podcast

In 1952, James Bond author Ian Fleming created *The Book Collector*, a “unique periodical for bibliophiles,” which has featured a wide range of articles pertaining to book collecting, modern first editions, typography, national libraries, and numerous other matters of interest to book collectors and enthusiasts. Fleming died in 1964, as did the journal’s editor John Hayward. After a brief hiatus, the journal started up again in the hands of its new owner and editor, Nicolas Barker. In 2016, Fleming’s nephews, James and Fergus Fleming, assumed leadership of the journal, and in 2020 they created a podcast, which features readings from the journal’s archives. There are now [36 podcasts](#), on SoundCloud.

University of Oxford Podcasts

Hundreds of podcasts are available in many series of interest to bibliophiles. Here are a few selections to get started:

[History of the Book](#) – Interactions between the history of the book and other areas of research.

[Fantasy Literature](#) – The roots of fantasy, the main writers and themes, and how to approach these texts.

Grolier Club of New York Videos

The Grolier Club of New York has posted over [240 videos on Vimeo](#), including many virtual exhibition openings and tours and many virtual show-and-tell episodes. Here is a sampling. All videos can be located on the Vimeo webpage listed above; the following links are direct to the listed video.

- [Virtual London Bibliophile Walking Tour](#)
- [Michael Witmore – The Lottery on Paper](#)
- [500 Years of Women’s Work](#)
- [Out of Line: The Unexpected Art of the Doodle](#)
- [A Year in the Basement with Walt Whitman](#)



Florida Bibliophile Society 2020–2021 Season



David Hall

Until further notice, all FBS meetings will be virtual via Zoom.

September 20 • FBS Members – Introduction to Zoom and Members' Show and Tell: Meeting attendees connected to our virtual meeting through Zoom. We learned about some helpful features of this software, shared about some special summer acquisitions, and had a generally good chat.

October 18 • Nigel Beale – How to Talk to a Bibliophile. Nigel hosts and produces *The BiblioFile* podcast. He has interviewed over 400 novelists, poets, publishers, and critics. Nigel shared about starting *The BiblioFile*, the many interviews he's conducted, and his own book interests. His presentation was followed by a lively Q&A with attendees.

November 15 • Mark Samuels Lasner – British Literature in the Mark Samuels Lasner Collection. Mark created an important collection of late 19th century British authors and donated the entire collection to the University of Delaware in 2016 – over 9,000 books, works of art, and ephemera. Mark talked about how he began collecting and the authors and important works in the collection.

December 20 • Happy Bibliophile Holiday Self-Gifting Party. A holiday party and gift exchange for the Covid era. Members were invited to buy themselves a special book and share it with the group. Delicious refreshments were self-served.

January 17 • Charles Brown – Henry Darger, Author and Artist. Charles presented the work of Henry Darger. When Darger died, writings and artworks amounting to thousands of pages were found in his small Chicago apartment, including Darger's

15,000-page novel, illustrated with watercolors, tracings, and collage.

February 21 • Rebecca Rego Barry – Carolyn Wells in the Library. Wells (1862–1942) wrote over 170 books, mostly mysteries. Rebecca discussed Wells's work and showed some of the books. Rebecca is author of *Rare Books Uncovered: True Stories of Fantastic Finds in Unlikely Places*. She is editor of *Fine Books & Collections*.

March 21 • Eric Steckler – The Jews in the American Civil War. Dr. Eric Steckler is a retired medical doctor and Jewish history scholar. Eric will discuss the fascinating role of Jews in the Civil War, their views on slavery and their divided loyalty between the Union and the Confederacy.

April 18 • Lola Haskins – A Reading of Selected Poems. Lola's presentations to FBS have been warmly received. She was scheduled to present from her newest collection *Asylum* in April 2020. The meeting was cancelled, but poems from *Asylum* appeared in *The Florida Bibliophile*. We immediately invited her back for Poetry Month 2021.

April 23–26 • Florida Antiquarian Book Fair. Sadly, the 2021 Florida Antiquarian Book Fair has been cancelled, but planning is underway for 2022. More time to save pennies!

May 16 • Annual FBS Banquet. Assuming that all pandemics are under control, we will be having our Annual Banquet on this date.

All meetings are held at 1:30 p.m. on Sunday afternoons unless otherwise announced.



Endpaper • Coincidences



Much of this month's newsletter is about two very successful American authors: Edith Wharton and Carolyn Wells. Both were born in 1862, and both lived about the same number of years. These parallel lives fascinated me. (Did they read each other?)

Both of them appearing in the same newsletter is a coincidence created first by our guest speaker Rebecca Rego Barry's choice of subject – Carolyn Wells – and her intriguing presentation of a very successful but lesser known author. Second was the offer by Terry Seymour to write a review of *What a Library Means to a Woman*, which appeared in last month's Books in Brief. Terry had read the book, and in this issue of our newsletter, he gives it his scholarly (and witty) attention.

Both Wharton and Wells wrote a great deal, and each author made her mark. They were both popular and widely read. It's a study in literary art – I can't say "high and low" art because the popular literature

that Carolyn Wells wrote was entertaining for children, young people, and adults. And entertaining reading helps people form and reinforce the habit of reading – which leads many people into more serious fiction like Wharton's. Each author in her own way made a contribution to the American culture of books and reading. Each in her own way wrote about the same social class and about the American character.

Perhaps the comparisons don't go much further – or maybe they do. It's hard to say what such investigations can yield until you undertake them. I hope Rebecca will return with new insights into Carolyn Wells at a future meeting. Until then, many of Wells's books are on the Internet, and whether you enjoy mystery, humor, or any of her other genres, they are waiting for you.

See you at the bookstore... and online!

— Charles

The Florida Bibliophile Society

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