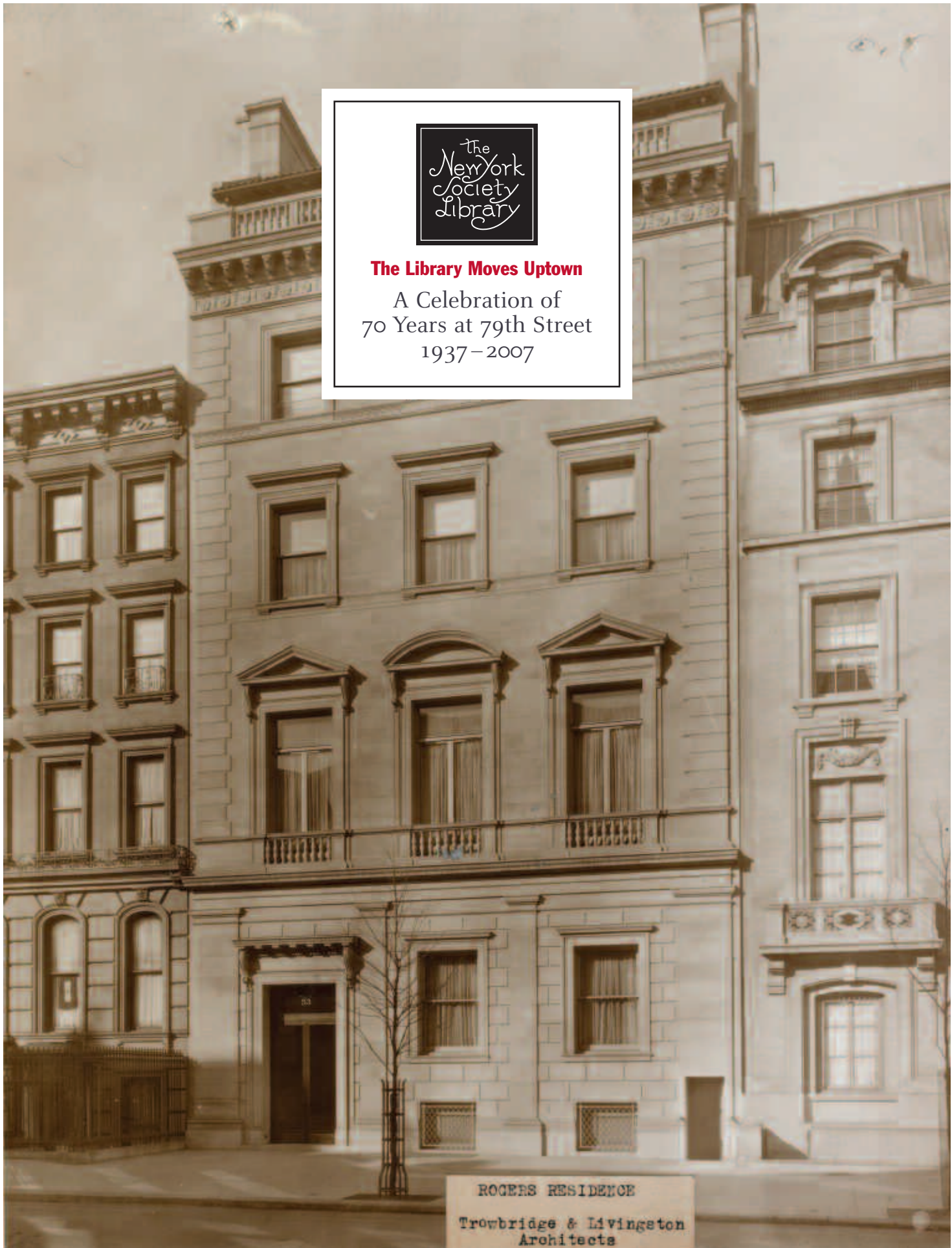




**The Library Moves Uptown**

A Celebration of  
70 Years at 79th Street  
1937–2007



# The Library Moves Uptown

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Photograph of the New York Public Library building under construction, showing the steel framework and scaffolding. The building is situated on a city street, with other multi-story buildings visible in the background. A horse-drawn carriage is parked on the street in the foreground.

Change was inevitable, and desirable. Too long the Library had stood for the old-world and quaint in its little backwater of University Place, an eighty-year stay that had been almost twice the length of any of its previous occupancies. The vitality of that enterprise which had started as an idea with six young New Yorkers in 1754 and had survived the Revolution and six succeeding wars, accumulating friends and funds all along the way, was worthy of the renewal which good stewardship had vouchsafed it three times in the past, and now planned again.

But change impending brings unease to hearts that know the tried and dear will never afterward be the same, and it was with relief that we heard in 1936 that the uncertainty at least was over. The Board had bought the 42.2 foot, five story house of Mrs. John Shillito Rogers at 53 East Seventy-ninth Street for \$175,000 and contracted with Snead and Company of Jersey City for alterations to cost about \$108,000 more. The papers printed the news in May. H.R. [librarian Helen Ruskell] and I went up to extract what promise we could from the handsome, impersonal, grey façade....

Rents being still well in hand, [we] found comfortable apartments not far off, from which we could walk to work. Gradually the neighborhood came to seem familiar, and we began to feel the pleasure of the bright renaissance.



### 1 (Cover)

Rogers House, completed in 1918. A Callery pear tree, which blooms abundantly in the spring, had been freshly planted.

Cornell University Libraries

### 2

Trowbridge and Livingston began construction on the Rogers' mansion in 1916. By early December framing was in place to the fourth floor.

Photography Collection, Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Arts, Prints & Photographs, the New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations

### 3

A view of 109 University Place, the Library's home from 1856–1937, by member D.T. Valentine, from the *Manual of the Corporation of the City of New York*.

Collection of the New York Society Library

# The Library's New Home

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During the early nineteen-thirties, as the city's population moved uptown, so too did many Library members. The trustees' decision to leave 109 University Place, its home for eighty years, upset some long-time subscribers devoted to the Library and the neighborhood. One member hung crepe on a drawing she made of the University Place façade to register grief over the anticipated move. But the Library's future now lay more than sixty blocks north on the rapidly expanding Upper East Side. The Library paid \$175,000 for the luxurious former town house of Mr. and Mrs. John Shillito Rogers located at 53 East 79th Street.

The New York architectural firm Trowbridge and Livingston had built the Rogers' home in 1916–17 on the site of two brownstones, numbers 53 and 55. This year marks the 90th anniversary of the building's construction. *The New York Times* wrote that the exterior of the building "gives an impression of great dignity." Among other notable New York City buildings constructed by Trowbridge and Livingston are the former B. Altman and Company (now home to the Science, Industry and Business Library of the New York Public Library and the CUNY Graduate Center), the J.P. Morgan building at 23 Wall Street and the Hayden Planetarium.

A generous bequest from Sarah Parker Goodhue given to the Library in memory of her husband, Charles Clarkson Goodhue, made the purchase of the Rogers' home possible. Mrs. Goodhue



4

In 1917 Sarah Parker Goodhue (1828–1917) bequeathed the Library funds that led to the purchase of the Rogers house in 1936. Charcoal portrait by Samuel Worcester Rowse.

Collection of the New York Society Library

also left her butler \$1,000 on condition that he keep a temperance pledge made during her lifetime. Both Mrs. Goodhue and Goodhue Livingston, the architect, share an ancestor in common—General Matthew Clarkson, who was an aide-de-camp to Benedict Arnold during the Revolution. Clarkson's portrait by the American painter Samuel Lovett Waldo hangs on the staircase leading to the second floor Members' Room.

## Rogers' Home In 79th Street Sold to Library

### New York Society to Make Alterations to Building to Fit New Purposes

The New York Society Library, the oldest library in the city, and one of the two or three oldest public libraries in the country, announces that it is about to move from its present building at 109 University Place to new quarters at 53 East Seventy-ninth Street, one door from the corner of Madison Avenue. Purchase of the new property, which has a frontage of 42.2 feet on Seventy-ninth Street, was completed yesterday by the trustees of the library. Brown, Wheelock, Harris & Co. Inc., and Alfred E. Schermerhorn, Inc., were the brokers. Menken, Ferguson & Hills represented the sellers as attorneys. The building, erected about seven years ago for the late John S. Rogers, will be extensively altered to adapt it to library purposes. It is expected that the alterations will be finished in time for occupancy some time next winter.

#### Housed in City Hall

The Society Library is a distinctive feature of New York life, and its building on University Place has been a landmark for many years. The library was founded in 1754 by a group of prominent citizens who thought that "a public library would be very useful as well as ornamental to this city." A charter was obtained from George III of England in 1772. During the Revolution the books were scattered, but in 1788 new trustees were elected and business was resumed.

The library occupied a part of the City Hall until 1795, when it erected

its own building at 33 Nassau Street. This was the first library building in New York. In 1836 the Nassau Street property was sold and a new building was erected at Broadway and Leonard Street, which the guide books of that period describe as "most imposing." In 1839 the New York Athenaeum, a literary and scientific institution, was united with the Society Library. The property at Leonard Street was sold in 1853, and three years later the library moved into the building at 109 University Place, which it has occupied since.

#### Fine Americana Collection

Although so old, the Society Library has often been a pioneer in adopting new ideas. It has the only free delivery system in this city and a system of delivering books everywhere through the country by express and parcel post. Besides the 734 members who hold shares which are perpetual and transferable, there are about 1,000 annual subscribers. The reading rooms are free. The library has a valuable collection of Americana, including many volumes not duplicated elsewhere in the city.

The present move was made possible by a bequest amounting to \$383,972, left to the library for the purpose of procuring a new building, by the late Sarah C. Goodhue. Other bequests have enabled the trustees to pursue a non-commercial policy. One important fund, established by the will of the late John C. Green, makes possible the maintenance and expansion of the valuable collection of art books which Mr. Green presented to the library.

The present officers of the library are Lewis Spencer Morris, president; F. A. de Peyster, secretary, and Arthur J. Morris, treasurer. Frank B. Bigelow is librarian. The trustees include Frederic F. de Rham, Edward C. Parish, Hamilton Fish Armstrong, Bertram Cruger, A. Coster Schermerhorn, Edmund P. Rogers, Samuel Verplanck Hoffman, E. Coster Willmerding, Edward C. Delafield, Donald C. Vaughan and Philip J. Roosevelt.

5

News of the New York Society Library's move uptown after eighty years at 109 University Place was covered in the April 5, 1937 *New York Herald Tribune* and the *New York Times*.

### Old Library Purchases New Home in 79th St.

The New York Society Library, one of the oldest public libraries in the country, has bought the building at 53 East Seventy-ninth Street and will move there within a few months after eighty years at 109 University Place.

The East Side building, erected about seven years ago for the late John S. Rogers, will be altered for the new owner. It has a frontage of 42.2 feet. The sale was negotiated by Brown, Wheelock, Harris & Co. and Alfred E. Schermerhorn, Inc., with Menken, Ferguson & Hills as attorneys for the buyers.

The library group was formed in 1754 and received a charter from King George III of England in 1772. For a time it occupied a part of the old City Hall. In 1795 it erected its own building at 33 Nassau Street and forty years later built at Broadway and Leonard Street. It has been at 109 University Place since 1856. Lewis Spencer Morris is president.



6

A portrait of John and Catherine Rogers taken during their honeymoon in Florence circa 1906. An ancestor of John Rogers was a law partner of Alexander Hamilton.

Rogers family archives, courtesy of Bard Rogers Hamlen

7

"It is spacious, elegant, entirely right," Augusta Owen Patterson wrote of the Rogers' Regency library (today the Members' Room) in *American Homes of Today* (1924).

Photograph by Tebbs.

Collection of the New York Society Library



Photos by Tebbs

PROWBRIDGE & LIVINGSTON, Architects

**LIBRARY IN THE TOWN-HOUSE OF MR. AND MRS. JOHN S. ROGERS**

A very perfect rendering of the French feeling in a New York house. This room is very large, very graceful, very comfortable. It derives from the Regency. The walls are in walnut, the rounded corners a special and delightful feature. The basins are flush with the wall, the openings utilized for the introduction of delicate curves and light ornament. Note the fine corner decoration of the cove connecting the dark wood and the ceiling.



## 8

Goodhue Livingston (1867–1951) was a partner in the New York architectural firm of Trowbridge and Livingston. One of his ancestors, Robert R. Livingston, was a founding member of this Library.

Photograph of portrait by unknown artist, courtesy of New York Genealogical and Biographical Society

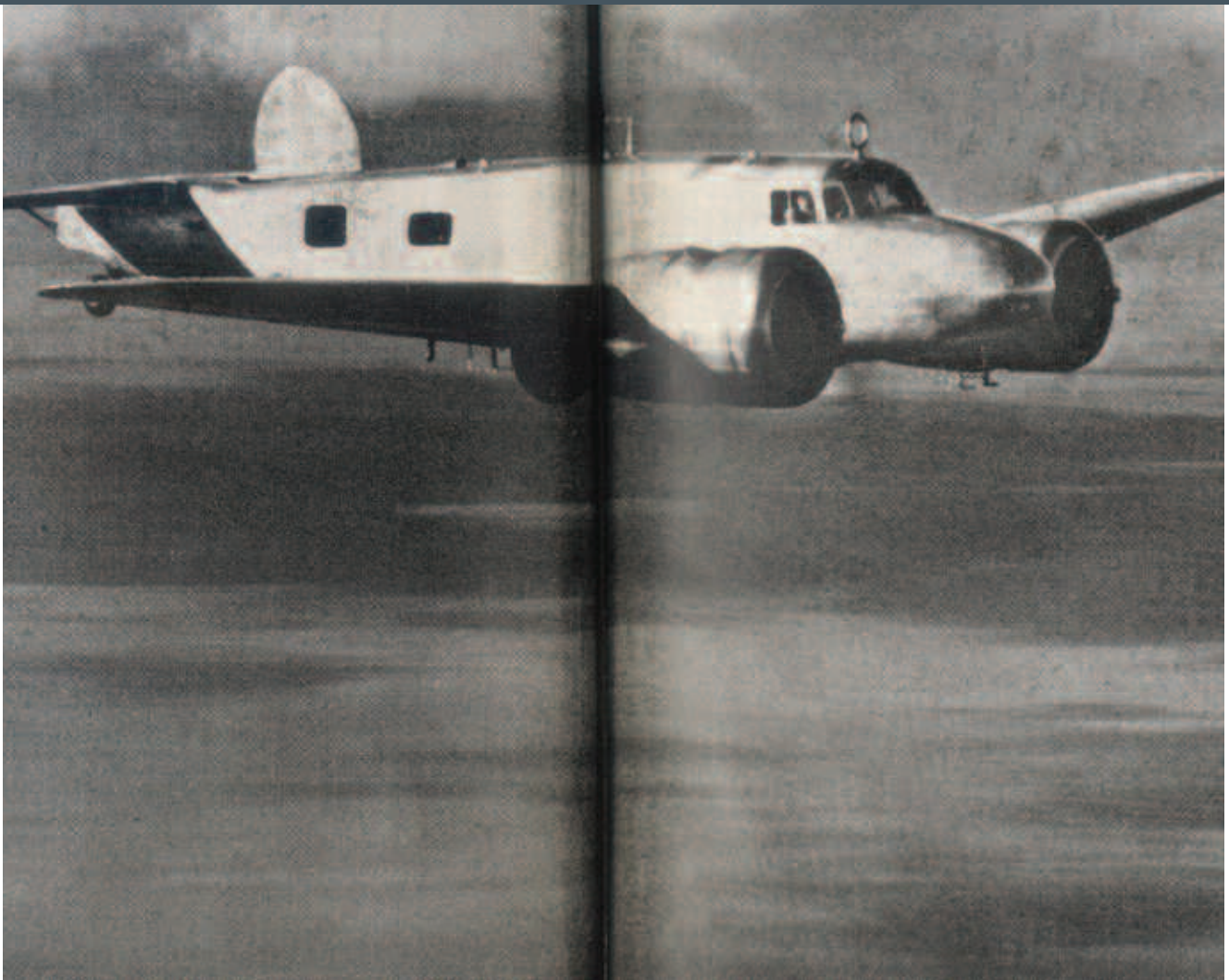
## Five Books Published in 1937

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“ The dimensions of my cubbyhole are four feet eight inches high, four feet six inches wide, and four feet six inches fore-and-aft. If you want to set up those measurements in your drawing room or library, it will help visualize the quarters in which a pilot works. Realize, too, that nearly every inch of floor, wall and ceiling is occupied with equipment. There are considerably more than a hundred gadgets in a modern cockpit that the pilot must periodically look at or twiddle.

And how does all that compare with a kitchen?

”





# Earhart, Amelia (1897–1937)

Arranged by George Palmer Putnam (1887–1950)

## LAST FLIGHT

New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc., 1937 • Book design by Robert Josephy

On July 2, 1936, Amelia Earhart disappeared over the South Pacific in her Lockheed Electra. She was on the last leg of her round-the-world flight from Miami to Howland Island. Earhart's disappearance, widely covered in the press and on the radio, captured the attention of the nation. She was one of the most well-known public figures of the 1930s with an uncanny resemblance to the boyish Charles Lindbergh. In the White House Eleanor Roosevelt closely followed the rescue efforts undertaken by the U.S. Navy. It was the most extensive sea search to date in U.S. history. Earhart's remains, and those of her co-pilot, were never found.

"If you ever figure in any unusual exploit, be it a flight, a voyage in a small boat, or, say a channel swim," Earhart once remarked, "there's a publisher close behind you who is treading on your heels." In Earhart's case, George Putnam (the grandson of the publisher G.P. Putnam), was the man shadowing her every move. Putnam, who married Earhart in 1931, manipulated her public-speaking engagements, lecture tours and writing assignments and raised money for her flights. A master of promotion, he seized every opportunity to publicize his wife's career. They were an early celebrity couple.

*World Flight* was the original title of the manuscript Earhart had promised her publishers to celebrate her record-breaking flight. It would have been her third book. After her death, Putnam basted the work together from Earhart's dispatches, notes and log-books scribbled in the cockpit as she flew over four continents.

Earhart was realistic about the hazards of flight and expressed uncertainty about completing the journey. It was going to be a feat of extreme navigational skill to locate a two-mile long sandbar in the South Pacific. Earhart's last radio contact was received on July 2 at 3:20 p.m. She had half an hour's fuel supply left. "I have a feeling there is just one more flight in my system," she had told Putnam. "This trip is it."

## LAST FLIGHT

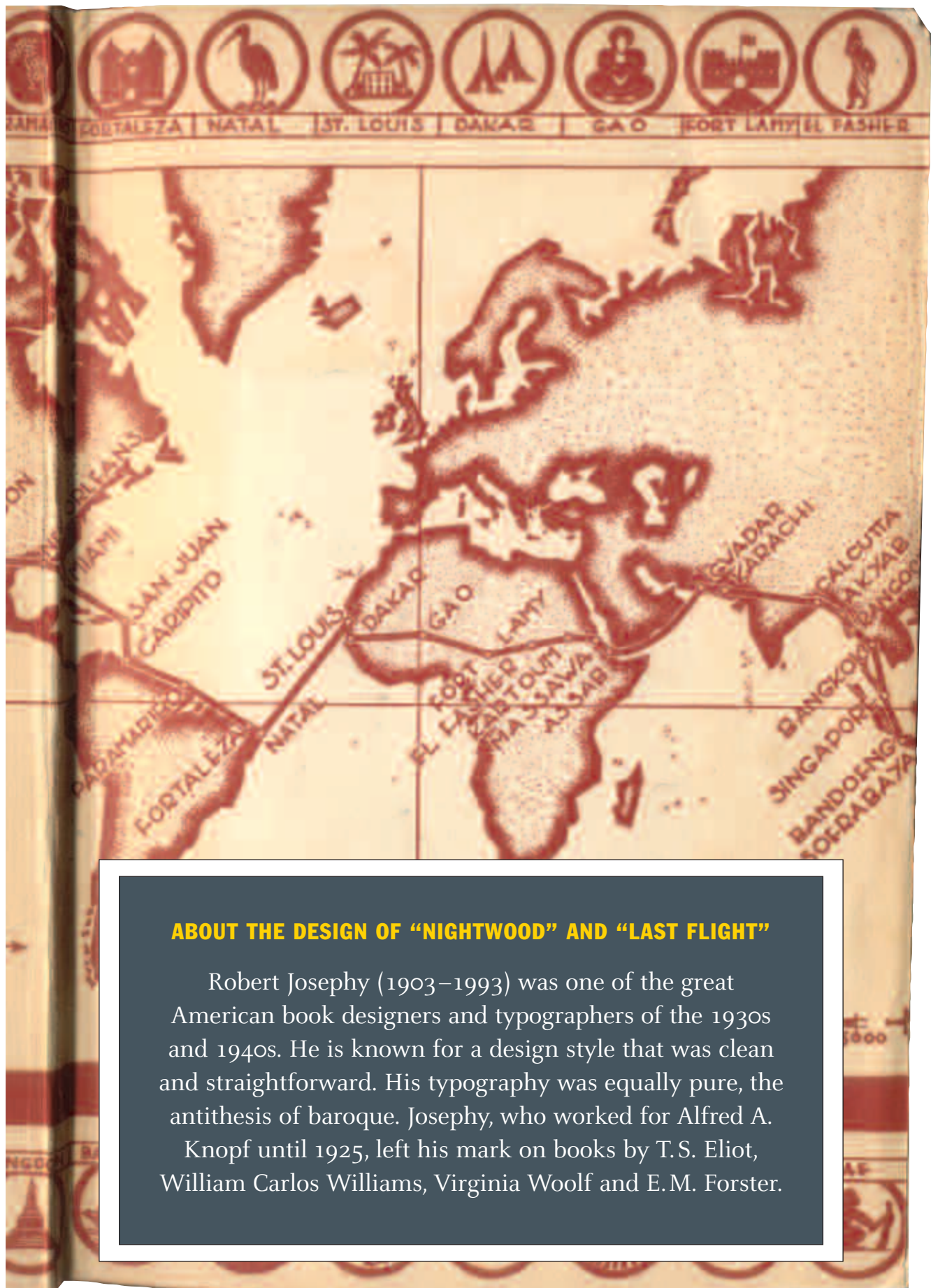
bookkeeping to do, for one should know exactly how much fuel has been used and how much remains.

The receiver for the Western Electric radio is under the co-pilot's seat and the transmitter in the cabin. The main dynamo is under my seat. The radio's cuplike microphone is hung beside the window at the left. Then there is the mechanism of the retractable landing gear and flap control. The flaps are an extension from the lower side of the trailing edges of the wings which act like brakes when landing.

Immediately to the right behind me, the door opens to the fuselage. In a cubbyhole there current charts reside, a thermos bottle, sandwiches, odds and ends. On a shelf at the bottom of the window are a flock of pencils and a notebook in which I write now and then. This haphazard authorship progresses best when the Sperry pilot "spells" me. Just above is the hatch, opening upwards. Usually I exit through it, although one may crawl over the tanks back into the fuselage and use the normal passenger door.

The dimensions of my cubbyhole are four feet eight inches high, four feet six inches wide, and four feet six inches fore-and-aft. If you want to set up those measurements in your drawing room or library, it will help visualize the quarters in which a pilot works. Realize, too, that nearly every inch of floor, wall and ceiling is

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### **ABOUT THE DESIGN OF “NIGHTWOOD” AND “LAST FLIGHT”**

Robert Josephy (1903–1993) was one of the great American book designers and typographers of the 1930s and 1940s. He is known for a design style that was clean and straightforward. His typography was equally pure, the antithesis of baroque. Josephy, who worked for Alfred A. Knopf until 1925, left his mark on books by T.S. Eliot, William Carlos Williams, Virginia Woolf and E.M. Forster.

Endpaper from *Last Flight*

# Barnes, Djuna (1892–1982)

## NIGHTWOOD

New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1937. 1st American ed. • Book design by Robert Josephy

She has been described as vulgar, beautiful, defiant, witty, poetic and a little mad. Walter Winchell once commented that she could “hit a cuspidor twenty feet away.” The lady in question is Djuna Barnes whose experimental novel *Nightwood* established her as a cult figure more sapphic than straight. Barnes, who moved in modernist and surrealist circles here and abroad, was not known for the clarity of her prose. In the words of one critic she was “more revered than read.” Even T.S. Eliot, who wrote the introduction to the American edition of *Nightwood*, confessed that it took him “some time to come to an appreciation of its meaning as a whole.”

*Nightwood*, dedicated to Peggy Guggenheim and John Ferrar Holms, involves five disturbed characters living in Paris whose lives intersect in the tortured realms of night and sleep. In a half-compliment, Dylan Thomas described the novel as “one of the three great prose books ever written by a woman.” Its quality of horror, according to Eliot, brings to mind Elizabethan tragedy. Barnes liked the title because “it makes it sound like night-shade, poison and night and forest...”

Barnes’s penchant for the obscure and complex stemmed from her unorthodox past. As a child she lived in Cornwall-on-Hudson with her parents, her father’s mistress, many children from both beds and her suffragette grandmother, who had held an avant-garde salon in London in the 1880s. Barnes’s milieu left her with a distinct aversion to the American middle-class, which she described as having “mink-trimmed minds and seal-edged morals.” Steering clear of such noxious influences, Barnes ran with the cutting-edge crowd in Greenwich Village until she decamped for Paris. She studied art, took many lovers and also for a time was a member of this Library. In *Books and People*, a history of the New York Society Library, Marion King described Barnes as an “intense dark-eyed member of the writers of the Nineteen-teens.”

In the early 1930s, Barnes, ravaged by a destructive personal life, declared there was “nothing left but a big crowd” on the Left Bank. By 1939 she had returned to New York City where she spent the rest of her life. Barnes describes this as her “Trappist period.” E.E. Cummings, her neighbor at Patchin Place in Greenwich Village, would call out of his window, “Are you still alive, Djuna?” Among Barnes’ admirers were Samuel Beckett, Anäis Nin and Dag Hammarskjöld.



“ Early in 1880, in spite of a well-founded suspicion as to the advisability of perpetuating that race which has the sanction of the Lord and the disapproval of the people, Hedvig Volkbein—a Viennese woman of great strength and military beauty, lying upon a canopied bed of a rich spectacular crimson, the valance stamped with the bifurcated wings of the House of Hapsburg, the feather coverlet an envelope of satin on which...stood the Volkbein arms—gave birth, at the age of forty-five, to an only child, a son, seven days after her physician predicted that she would be taken.

”

Benét, Stephen Vincent (1898–1943)

## THE DEVIL AND DANIEL WEBSTER

New York: Farrar & Rinehart, 1937 • Illustrated by Harold Denison

In the months before he wrote *The Devil and Daniel Webster*, Stephen Vincent Benét was shadowed by the specters of poverty and self-reproach. “This degrading, humiliating and constant need of money is something that stupefies the mind and saps the vitality,” he wrote. “Will I ever get free of it & be able to do my work in peace.”

In spite of his financial struggles, Benét managed in ten days to produce a masterpiece of American fiction. In his 30,000 word novella, Daniel Webster rescues from perdition the New Hampshire farmer Jabez Stone, who has sold his soul to the devil, known in those parts as Mr. Scratch.

Benet had originally thought of Webster as “an orator with one hand stuck in the bosom of his frock coat.” But influenced by Van Wyck Brook’s description of the New England statesman in *The Flowering of New England*, he created, in the words of one critic, “an ideal folk-hero.” Benét writes, “... a man with a mouth like a mastiff, a brow like a mountain and eyes like burning anthracite—that was Daniel Webster in his prime.”

*The Devil and Daniel Webster*, first published in the October 24, 1936 issue of *The Saturday Evening Post*, established Benét as a major American writer, or, as he describes himself, “quite the white-headed boy.” In his biographer’s words, he became “a story-teller to the nation.” Benét, who had won the nation’s attention, now devoted his energies to writing about the growing dangers of Nazi tyranny and American responsibilities in an increasingly dangerous world. He served as a trustee of this Library for less than a year before his death in 1943.

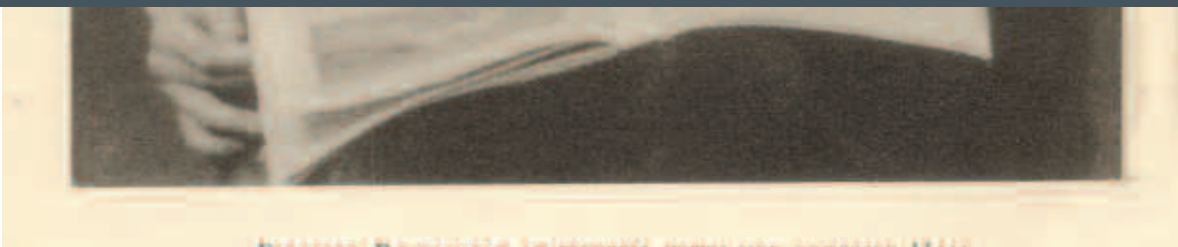


“ Yes, Dan’l Webster’s dead—or, at least, they buried him. But every time there’s a thunderstorm around Marshfield, they say you can hear his rolling voice in the hollows of the sky. And they say that if you go to his grave and speak loud and clear, “Dan’l Webster—Dan’l Webster!” the ground’ll begin to shiver and the trees begin to shake. And after a while you’ll hear a deep voice saying, “Neighbor, how stands the Union?” Then you better answer the Union stands as she stood, rock-bottomed and copper-sheathed, one and indivisible, or he’s liable to rear right out of the ground...”

”



“ Very early I became conscious of the fact that there were men and women and children around me who suffered in one way or another. I think I was five or six when my father took me for the first time to help serve Thanksgiving Day dinner in one of the newsboys’ club-houses which my grandfather, Theodore Roosevelt, had started. He was also a Trustee of the Childrens Aid Society for many years. I was tremendously interested in all these ragged little boys and in the fact, which my father explained, that many of them had no homes and lived in little wooden shanties in empty lots, or slept in vestibules of houses or public buildings or any place where they could be moderately warm. Yet they were independent and earned their own livings. ”



Eleanor Roosevelt with her younger brother Hall from *This is My Story*



# Roosevelt, Eleanor (1884–1962)

## THIS IS MY STORY

New York: Harper & Brothers, 1937

During President Roosevelt's first term in office, with millions of Americans still struggling under the shadow of the Great Depression, Eleanor Roosevelt emerged as a strong and humane voice for her husband's New Deal. In a break with tradition, she held weekly press conferences with women reporters, broadcast regularly, and traveled tirelessly across the country on his behalf. A daily newspaper columnist for the United Feature Syndicate, Roosevelt also wrote countless articles for popular publications. She spoke and wrote simply and to the point.

Off-stage, Roosevelt's friends and family loved to hear her stories about her early life. Secretly, Roosevelt had always wanted to write a novel or a play but did not think she had the technical skills. Encouraged by her literary agent, George Bye, she considered writing her autobiography. Now in the late fall of 1936 on the campaign train with FDR who was seeking his second term, she dictated sections of *This is My Story* to her personal secretary, Tommy Thompson. Her biographer Joseph Lash comments on her "incredible ability" to work under deadline pressure.

The *Ladies' Home Journal* paid \$75,000 for serial rights, the same year the book was published by Harper & Brothers. Roosevelt's editors praised the "simplicity and forthrightness" of the early chapters which describe her unhappy childhood. They were "all aglow" with what she had submitted. But the second half of the manuscript required more work. Eleanor was less forthcoming about her years in Washington, her husband's struggle with polio and her relationship with her notoriously difficult mother-in-law. Nor did she allude to the strains imposed on her marriage by her husband's affair with her private secretary Lucy Mercer. About one chapter, her editor Bruce Gould burst out "it has nothing to say—in fact—it's terrible!" Uncertain as a writer, Eleanor took criticisms seriously and in the end successfully deepened the dramatic tone of her book.

Praise for *This is My Story* came from many quarters—from her publishers, from the powerful, from her cousin Alice Roosevelt Longworth who acknowledged that Eleanor could indeed write but, most importantly, from the poor, who felt she understood their own struggles and identified with her. At a book party, a radiant Eleanor said to her publishers, "I can't tell you what it means to have this wonderful recognition for something I have done myself not on account of Franklin's position."

Steinbeck, John (1902–1968)

## OF MICE AND MEN

New York: The Modern Library, 1937

The wild land around Salinas, California, thirty miles inland from the coast, was the setting for many of John Steinbeck's novels. As a young man, Steinbeck, born in Salinas in 1902, worked shoulder to shoulder with itinerant laborers or *bindlestiffs* who moved from ranch to ranch in the valley hunting for work. Here was raw material for a young and ambitious writer seeking to expose the fault lines of the Great Depression.

Steinbeck completed *Of Mice and Men*, a 30,000 word novella, in about two months. He took the title from Robert Burn's phrase: "The best laid schemes o'mice and men/Gang aft a'gley." George and Lennie were composites of people he had known, violence he had witnessed. They were broken men but they had their dreams, fated to end in tragedy. "Lennie was a real person...He killed a ranch foreman...stuck a pitchfork right through his stomach. I saw him do it." This Library's Marion King described *Of Mice and Men* as a "small, poignant, somewhat unpleasant story of a dangerously simple soul."

One afternoon Steinbeck discovered that his setter puppy had torn half the manuscript to pieces. "I was pretty mad," Steinbeck wrote to a friend, "but the poor little fellow may have been acting critically. [No need to ruin] a good dog for a mss I'm not sure is good at all." *Of Mice and Men*, first published by Covici-Friede and then by The Modern Library, made the best seller list within weeks of publication. But as Steinbeck's popularity rose so did his discomfiture with the outward trappings of success.

In 1937 *Of Mice and Men* was also performed on Broadway where it won the Drama Critics Award as the best American play of the year. In the 1939 screen version, Lon Chaney Jr. starred as the ill-fated Lennie, Burgess Meredith as George. "All I tried to write," Steinbeck later said, "was the story of two Salina Valley vagrants...I don't know what it means, if anything, and damned if I care. My business is only story-telling." Two years later Steinbeck published *The Grapes of Wrath*.



“

They had walked in single file down the path, and even in the open one stayed behind the other. Both were dressed in denim trousers and in denim coats with brass buttons. Both wore black, shapeless hats and both carried tight blanket rolls slung over their shoulders. The first man was small and quick, dark of face, with restless eyes and sharp, strong features... Behind him walked his opposite, a huge man, shapeless of face, with large, pale eyes, with wide, sloping shoulders; and he walked heavily, dragging his feet a little, the way a bear drags his paws...

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# Documenting the Library's Move

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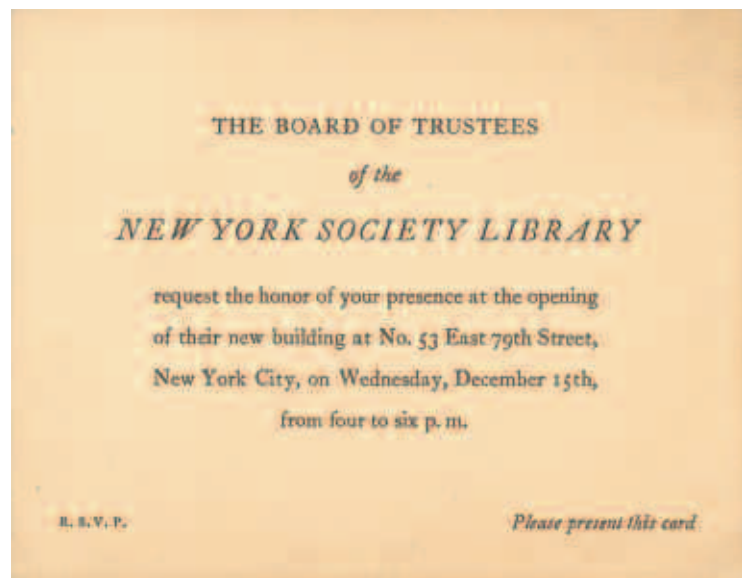
Planning and executing the move took months of hard, often back-breaking, work. After reviewing several bids, the Library chose the Franklin Fireproof Warehouses of Brooklyn to move the Library's collection of 150,000 books at a cost of \$8,100. (The Library now has 275,000 volumes in its holdings.)

At University Place, "the most ephemeral and trivial fiction was pulled out and sold." Out-of-date science and medical books were offered to the New York Academy of Medicine. Shelf by shelf the books were dusted, vacuumed, placed in boxes, color coded and numbered. Meanwhile at 79th Street, Snead and Company of Jersey City was overseeing the renovation. The firm pioneered the concept of open stacks in twentieth-century library design. The back half of the building was torn out and converted into twelve tiers of metal stacks. Snead and Company's supervisor, a Dickensian figure of great probity, reported regularly on the progress of the reconstruction to Lewis Spencer Morris, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

On December 15, 1937, Mr. Morris welcomed members and guests to the Library's formal opening in its fifth home since the Library first opened its doors in 1754 in the "Library Room" at City Hall. In his remarks he noted that "the building has been remodeled along modern lines but the atmosphere which has so long characterized [this Library] has been retained."

## 9

A large number of guests, including former owner, Mrs. John Rogers, attended the reception and tea marking the Library's formal opening on December 15, 1937.



The Franklin Fireproof Warehouses of Brooklyn moved the Library's entire collection through the spring and fall of 1937. The move cost \$8,100.

FRANKLIN FIREPROOF WAREHOUSES		WAREHOUSES	
Office and Household Removals Storage—Packing		BROOKLYN, N. Y.	
91 CLIFTON PLACE		BROOKLYN, N. Y.	
New York Society Library 22 East 79th Street, New York City.		BROOKLYN, N. Y.	
R. F. LEVHIAN, Inc.		Tel. NEvins 8-3400	
Feb. 4/37	1 van 4 men from 8:00 a.m. to 12:50 noon 4 hours str. time @ \$6.00 per hour 1/2 hours overtime @ \$12.00 per hour	\$22.00 10.00	
Feb. 16	1 van 2 men from 9:45 a.m. to 10:45 a.m. 2 hours @ \$5.00 per hour	10.00	
May 3	1 van 5 men from 8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. 4 1/2 hours @ \$9.50 per hour	42.75	
	2 vans 5 men from 1:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. 4 1/2 hours @ \$11.50 per hour	51.75	
	2 vans 13 men from 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. 8 1/2 hours @ \$23.50 per hour	199.75	
May 4	2 vans 16 men from 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. 8 1/2 hours @ \$28.00 per hour	238.00	
May 5	2 vans 20 men from 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. 8 1/2 hours @ \$34.00 per hour	289.00	
May 6	2 vans 22 men from 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. 8 1/2 hours @ \$37.00 per hour	314.50	
May 7	1 van 13 men from 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. 8 1/2 hours @ \$23.50 per hour	199.75	
	1 van 4 men from 8:00 a.m. to 12:50 noon 4 hours str. time @ \$8.00 per hour 1/2 hours overtime @ \$12.00 per hour	\$32.00 10.00	
	1 van 2 men from 9:45 a.m. to 10:45 a.m. 2 hours @ \$5.00 per hour	10.00	
May 3	1 van 5 men from 8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. 4 1/2 hours @ \$9.50 per hour	42.75	
	2 vans 5 men from 1:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. 4 1/2 hours @ \$11.50 per hour	51.75	
	2 vans 13 men from 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. 8 1/2 hours @ \$23.50 per hour	199.75	
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In the 1938 annual report, Board Chairman Lewis Spencer Morris, praised the staff for "the spirit of service and cooperation they have shown during the past year..."

NEW YORK SOCIETY LIBRARY

Statement of Income Receipts and Disbursements  
for the Year Ended March 31st, 1938

BALANCE—April 1st, 1937 ..... \$26,618.15

RECEIPTS

INVESTMENT INCOME—PER SCHEDULE I

General Fund ..... \$11,497.50  
Goodhue Fund ..... 22,926.45  
Green Fund ..... 2,087.31 \$36,511.26

INTERNAL INCOME

Dues ..... 340.00  
Subscriptions ..... 8,472.80  
Delivery ..... 436.00  
Fines ..... 135.12  
Books sold ..... 430.57  
Postage ..... 215.68  
Telephone ..... 8.86  
Miscellaneous ..... 15.86 6,034.81

Total Receipts ..... 46,786.29

\$73,004.44

DISBURSEMENTS

OPERATING

Books ..... \$5,025.24  
Binding and Repairs ..... 105.36  
Periodicals ..... 466.25  
Postage ..... 591.59  
Printing ..... 934.91  
Supplies ..... 442.02  
Delivery ..... 5,434.64  
Salaries ..... 22,954.73

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Building Repairs and Maintenance ..... 734.46  
Furnishings ..... 65.33  
Electricity and Gas ..... 1,575.27  
Heat ..... 1,111.08  
Insurance ..... 1,853.03  
Cleaning Supplies ..... 638.82  
Telephone ..... 165.40  
Water ..... 37.95  
Pension Fund Premium ..... 69.00  
Miscellaneous Expense ..... 1,582.73

Total Operating Disbursements ..... \$46,077.50

OTHER DISBURSEMENTS

Interest on Mortgage ..... \$2,025.00  
Custody of Securities and Bookkeeping ..... 872.50  
Transfer to Principal—To be refunded ..... 515.57 4,013.07

Total Disbursements ..... 48,090.57

BALANCE—March 31st, 1938 ..... \$24,913.87

NEW YORK  
Society Library

ANNUAL REPORT

1938

Founded 1754

53 East Seventy-ninth Street

New York Society Library  
103 University Place

May 26, 1937

Dear Mr. Morris:

May I add my plea to the enclosed letter that we also protest against this open-air Roof Cabaret? It is very noisy into the wee small hours and decidedly objectionable in a residential neighborhood.

Sincerely

Edith H. Crowell

no music now  
to close 30 min, but  
avg 12-4.  
no further complaint  
by Miss Crowell  
2nd @ 4 - 6/30/37  
53 East 79th St.  
J. L. J.  
Please speak to me  
PC

RECEIVED M. & McV.
MAY 27 1937
FILE _____
ANS'D _____
REF'D TO _____

FREDERICK C. ROGERS

20 EXCHANGE PLACE  
NEW YORK

April 21st,  
1936.

RECEIVED
APR 21 1936
FILE _____
ANS'D _____
REF'D TO _____

Re: 53 E. 79th Street.

Messrs. Morris & McVeigh,  
60 Wall Street,  
New York City.

Attention: Mr. Matthews.

Dear Sirs:

Confirming my conversation with you yesterday, under the terms of the contract of sale Mrs. Rogers would like to move from the premises the dining room mantel, the drawing room mantel, and the pantry sink.

The foreman of Marc Eidlitz & Co. advises me that the expense of removing these items would be materially less if the work were done by the contractors doing the work for the Library at the time that the remodelling takes place. I should be pleased to hear from you whether it will be agreeable to the Library to have said items removed as suggested, the cost of same to be paid by Mrs. Rogers.

Very truly yours,

Frederick C. Rogers

*1 phoned F. C. R. would prefer  
not to remove them,  
P.S.M.*

FCR/o

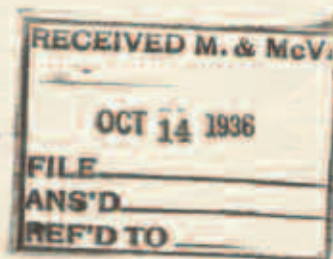


13

During the reconstruction there was some minor confusion about what Mrs. Rogers could legally remove from the premises.

FREDERICK C. ROGERS

20 EXCHANGE PLACE  
NEW YORK



October 13th,  
1936.

Dear Mr. Morris:

I acknowledge receipt of your letter of October 9th. I think there must have been some error on the part of the workmen, as far as I know there was no attempt on our part to remove a mantel from 53 E. 79th Street.

I believe my mother was in the building recently, inquiring about a hearth, but nothing further was done about it.

I hope I shall have the opportunity of seeing the library when the work is completed.

Very truly yours,

*Frederick C. Rogers*

Louis Spencer Morris, Esq.,  
60 Wall Street,  
New York City.

FCR/o

# Views of the Library

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After the dust from the reconstruction settled, the Library reopened for business. Many downtown members, including Ruth Draper and Norman Thomas, renewed their subscriptions. Among the new uptown members were Mrs. Chester Dale, Edward Steichen and the Oswald Villards, who lived down the block. Miss Hewitt, who had originally held classes on the top floor of this building for the children of the previous owners, John and Catherine Rogers, also joined. Articles in newspapers and *The New Yorker* brought in additional members. With the move the cost of an annual subscription went up from \$12 to \$15.

Frank B. Bigelow, who had been Head Librarian at University Place from 1895 to 1937, retired and moved to Amherst, Massachusetts. His successor was Edith Hall Crowell. Helen Ruskell, who had first come to work at University Place in 1920 as a fresh-faced girl, presided at the front loan desk. Marion King, the Assistant Librarian, sat at the smaller desk with a leather armchair beside it to receive members.

Three years after the Library moved uptown, 109 University Place was torn down to make way for an apartment house.



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The Members' Room in the newly opened Library, 1937.

Collection of The New York Society Library





### 3 and 4

The long loan desk of dark carved oak and the smaller desk were made to order for the Library's new home by Gaylord of Syracuse. Marion King requested a bell at the main desk to call the pages.

Collection of The New York Society Library

### 5 and 6

Recent views of the circulation desk and the staircase leading to the Assunta, Ignazio, Ada and Romano Peluso Exhibition Gallery.

Photographs by James Dow

### 15 (Next Spread)

Photographs taken soon after the Rogers moved into 53 East 79th Street. During their occupancy, the house was hung with tapestries and chandeliers. Today the entry hall remains unchanged as does the second floor landing, except for the leaded glass ceiling which was removed.

*The Architectural Review*, February 1919.

Art & Architecture Collection, Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs, the New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations







ENTRANCE HALL, STAIRWAY

RESIDENCE FOR JOHN S. ROGERS

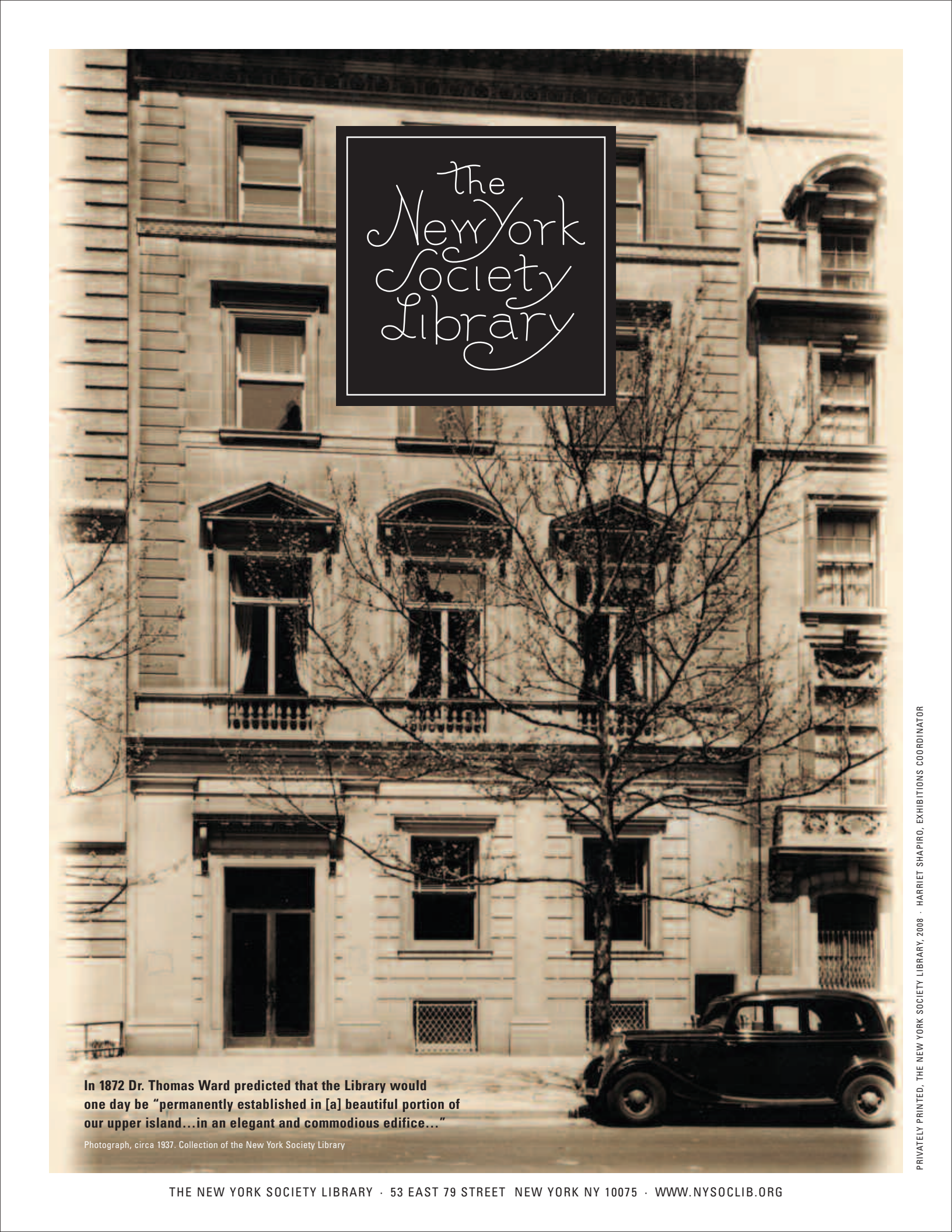
TROWBRIDGE



STAIRWAY LANDING, MAIN FLOOR

ERS, ESQ., 53 EAST 79TH STREET, NEW YORK

& LIVINGSTON, ARCHITECTS



The  
New York  
Society  
Library

**In 1872 Dr. Thomas Ward predicted that the Library would one day be “permanently established in [a] beautiful portion of our upper island...in an elegant and commodious edifice...”**

Photograph, circa 1937. Collection of the New York Society Library