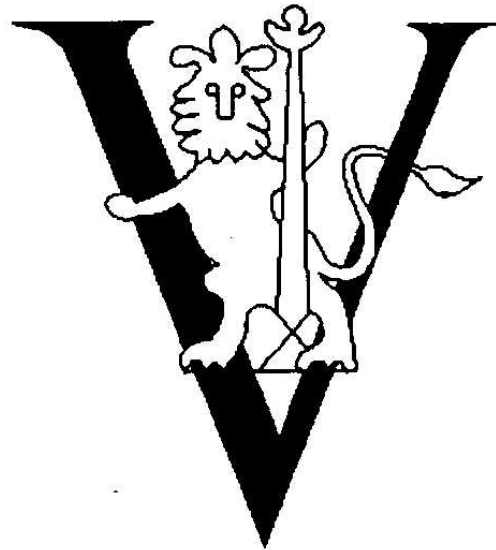


**RARITIES
AND
ODDITIES**

IN THE

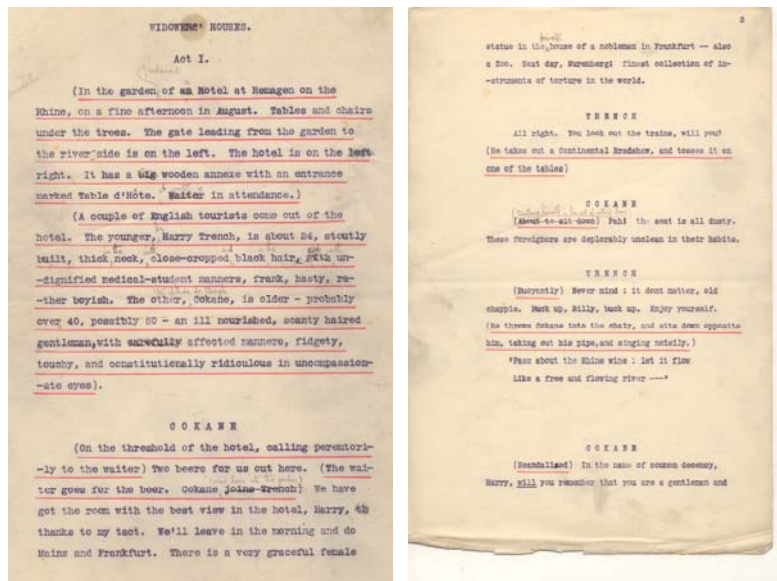
**NEW YORK SOCIETY
LIBRARY**



**PRESENTED BY AREVIG CAPRIELIAN
RARE BOOKS LIBRARIAN**

The very age of the New York Society Library indicates that our holdings would naturally include rare books. In over the 250 years of our existence, we have accumulated valuable books through regular acquisitions (for which we have manuscript records); some as generous gifts or bequests, and some through proper identification of volumes in the circulating collection. Few American libraries can boast such canonized rarities as incunabula, of which we hold 10 titles, dating from 1475 to 1498.

Representative titles of early printed books can be found in the Library's Sharp and Winthrop collections. (See our website for more information on the latter). Since most of these titles were purchased from European book dealers, they constitute a multi-lingual collection, including Latin, German, and French titles, and of course some English-language books. The retrospective conversion project provided full electronic access to most but not all of our rare books. Parts of Winthrop, Sharpe, Da Ponte, Sharaff/Sze collections, as well as the Noneshuch Press publications are not yet in electronic format.



I: HISTORICAL RARITIES:
Typescript of George Bernard Shaw's *Widowers House*

Historical/Bibliographical rarities

Books that possess historical and/or bibliographical value constitute an important category of rare books. They can be divided into sub-categories as follows:

Pioneering in a field or discipline

The first group of 'pioneering' titles is a rather self-evident group of books that broke new ground in a particular subject. Examples are Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*, or Einstein's *Relativitätstheorie (Theory of relativity)*. This category also includes books on first expeditions, discoveries and explorations, etc. The Winthrop collection, among other reasons is significant for the pioneering works in astronomy and natural sciences, especially in chemistry.

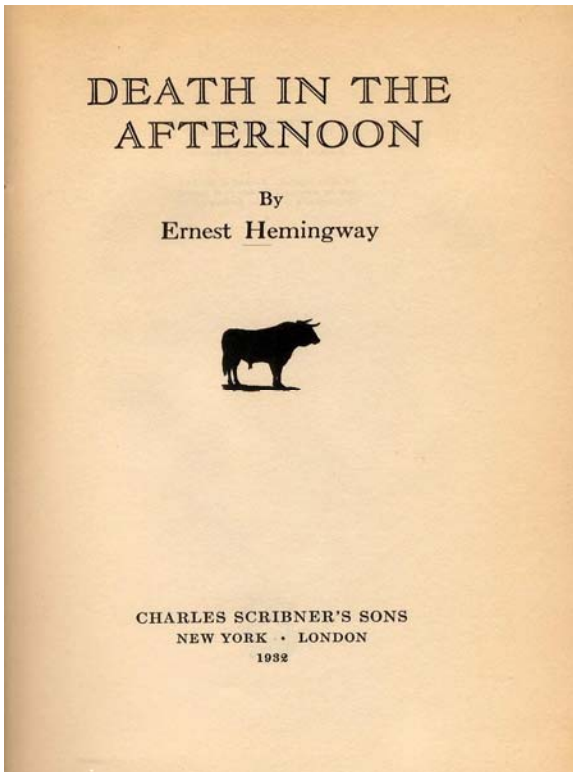
Banned titles

Books -- and their precursors -- have been banned and destroyed throughout mankind's history. Such treatment makes a book subsequently more sought-after, and attracts more readers and collectors than it would have with a non-controversial past.

The Library holds numerous books that have been banned at some point of their existence. Examples mentioned below are only those that represent additional points of interest.

1. MACHIAVELLI, NICCOLO, 1469-1527. *Il Principe (The Prince)*.

First published in 1513, it has been banned in various countries. It made a regrettable return to notoriety via Mussolini's effusive praise and the Fascist state's distribution of cheap reprints in the thousands. We have an early printing (Frankfurt, 1622) of this work in the Winthrop collection.



**II: BANNED TITLE & FIRST EDITION:
Ernest Hemmingway's *Death in the Afternoon***

2. HEMINGWAY, ERNEST, 1899-1961. *Death in the Afternoon*.

First published in 1932. All books by Hemingway were included in the 1933 Nazi book burnings. Shockingly, *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) was banned in Boston in 1930 on grounds of being lewd. This particular title was ultimately redeemed, receiving the Nobel Prize in Literature.

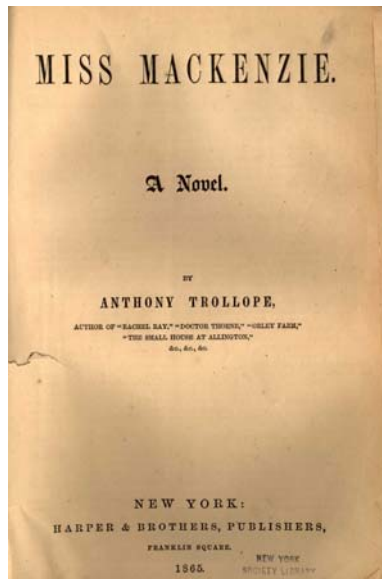
It should also be mentioned that works by such luminaries as Mark Twain and Walt Whitman were banned in this country: *Leaves of Grass* was purchased by but a single library in its initial run, the Library Company of Philadelphia. Twain's *Tom Sawyer* (1876) and *Huckleberry Finn* (1885) were banned in this very city, in Concord, Massachusetts, and by the Denver Public Library. Among the least predictable and most absurd reasons for banning was the one applied to Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865) by the Governor of Hunan Province in China in 1931. The Governor's reasoning was that "animals should not use human language", and that it was "disastrous to put animals and human beings on the same level."

- **Awarded and otherwise formally recognized titles**

This is a fairly easy group to identify. For the New York Society Library, awarded books by persons affiliated with the Library are of particular importance. Having an extraordinarily strong literature collection, we have quite a number of titles that fall into this category.

- **Controversial subjects**

Good examples of this category would be the first American anti-slavery pamphlets. This group generally implies extreme expressions of thought, whichever end of the political or moral spectrum they might reside.



III: PIRATED EDITION:
Title Page of Anthony Trollope's *Miss Mackenzie*.
New York: Harper & Bros., 1865.

- **Pirated editions**

Under this rather harsh definition one should recognize an impatience to make a popular work/author immediately available. It was not done solely out of desire for profit, but often as a clever circumvention of delaying, bureaucratically cumbersome factors. U.S. publishers were quick to do this with British publications, and most if not all Soviet publications of Western literature could be considered piracies.

S. L. CLEMENS, SEC. I

198

Printed wrapper.

"Speech on Woman," pp. 39-42.

H Y

3409. Study and Stimulants ... Edited by A. Arthur Reade.

Manchester: Abel Heywood and Son, 56 and 58, Oldham Street. London: Simpkin, Marshall, and Co. 1883 ...

Statement, dated March 14, 1882, pp. 120-122.

Listed Ath March 3, 1883; PC March 15, 1883. Advertised Ath March 31, 1883. Deposited AMU June 7, 1883. A Philadelphia (Lippincott) edition listed PW April 14, 1883.

NYPL Y

3410. LIFE ON THE MISSISSIPPI BY MARK TWAIN ...

LONDON CHATTO & WINDUS, PICCADILLY 1883 ...

<i>ii>, <i>xxxvi>, <1>-561; blank, p. <562>; publisher's device, p. <563>. Illustrated. 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 5".<>⁸, a⁶, B-I, K-U, X-Z, AA-II, KK-NN⁸, OO².

S cloth: red. White paper end papers printed in brown with a leaf pattern. Inserted at back: Publisher's catalog dated March, 1883. Also noted with inserted catalog dated February, 1889.

Under the title *Mississippi Sketches* advertised as *shortly* in Ath Sept. 23, 1882. Advertised for May 12 in Ath April 28, 1883. Published May 12, 1883 (Johnson). Listed Ath May 12, 1883. For prior publication of a portion of this book see *Old Times on the Mississippi*, 1876, above. For first American edition see next entry.

NYPL Y

3411. LIFE ON THE MISSISSIPPI BY MARK TWAIN ...

BOSTON JAMES R. OSGOOD AND COMPANY 1883

<1>-624. Illustrated. 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ ".<1>-10, <11>-19, <20>-25, <26>-33, <34>-37, <38>-39⁸.S cloth: brown. Gray-tan end papers. Flyleaves. According to the publisher's prospectus also available in cloth, gilt edges; sprinkled calf; half calf; half morocco; morocco; library (*i.e.*, sheep) style.

Note: The sheets occur as follows:

FIRST STATE

P. 441: Present is a tail-piece depicting an urn, flames, head of Mark Twain.

P. 443: The caption reads THE ST. LOUIS HOTEL
FIRST STATE, INTERMEDIATE A (B?)

P. 441: Tail-piece described is present.

P. 443: The caption reads THE ST. CHARLES HOTEL
FIRST STATE, INTERMEDIATE B (A?)

P. 441: Tail-piece not present, having been removed at the request of Mrs. Clemens who considered it morbid.

P. 443: The caption reads THE ST. LOUIS HOTEL

SECOND STATE

P. 441: Tail-piece not present.

P. 443: The caption reads THE ST. CHARLES HOTEL

"It will be published by subscription only ... Fifty thousand copies have been printed, and forty thousand will be bound and ready on publication day."—PW April 28, 1883. Deposited May 17, 1883. Listed PW July 7, 1883. Unsold sheets were reissued with the cancel title-page of Charles L. Webster & Company, 1891. See preceding entry for the London edition which appears to have been published several days before the American edition. For prior publication of a portion of this book see *Old Times on the Mississippi*, 1876, above. The Leipzig (Tauchnitz) edition was issued in printed paper wrapper, the back wrapper dated May, 1883; day of publication not known. The Montreal (Dawson) edition may have been issued simultaneously with the London edition. The copyright notice is in the name of Andrew Chatto. However, the style of the title-page is so like the American that it is clearly a copy. It must be noted, however, that the Canadian publishers may have used the prospectus of the American edition as a model. Reissued, 1944, by The Limited Editions Club, New York, 1200 numbered copies only, "with an introduction by Edward Wagenknecht and a number of previously suppressed passages, now printed for the first time, and edited with a note by Willis Wager." See under 1913 for *The Suppressed Chapter of Life on the Mississippi*.

BPL (A B 2nd) CAW (1st, being the publisher's file copy) H (1st A 2nd) LC (1st, being a deposit copy) NYPL (1st A 2nd) Y (1st A 2nd)

3412. The New Guide of the Conversation in Portuguese and English in Two Parts by Pedro Carolino ... with an Introduction by Mark Twain.

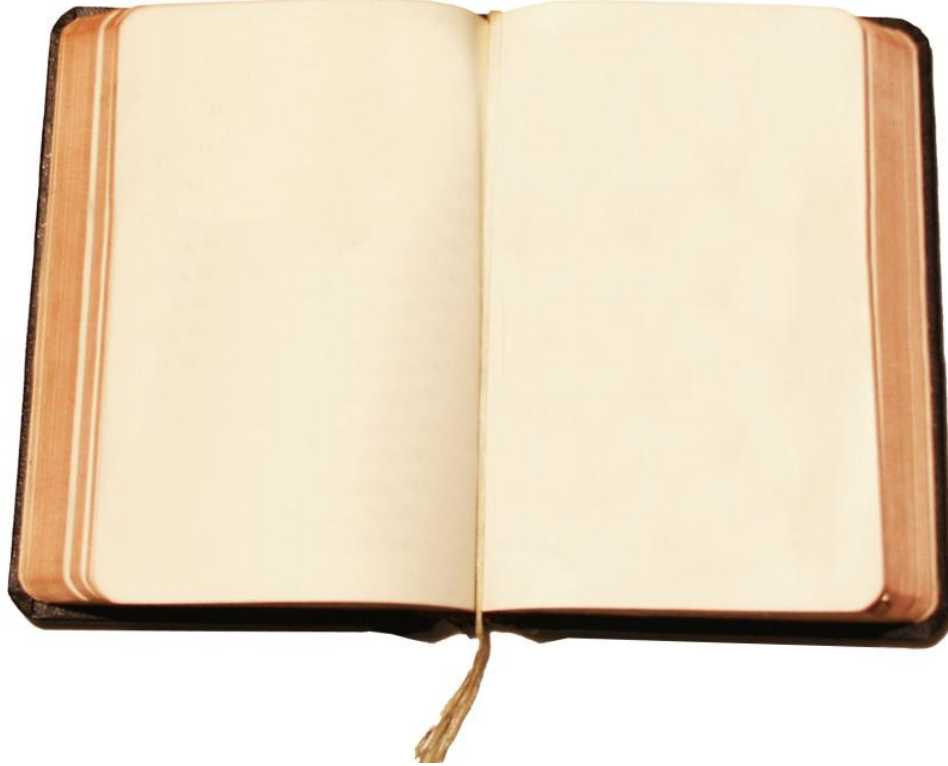
Boston James R. Osgood and Company 1883

IV: BAL

Page from *Bibliography of American Literature (BAL)*
detailing first edition of Mark Twain's *Life on the Mississippi*

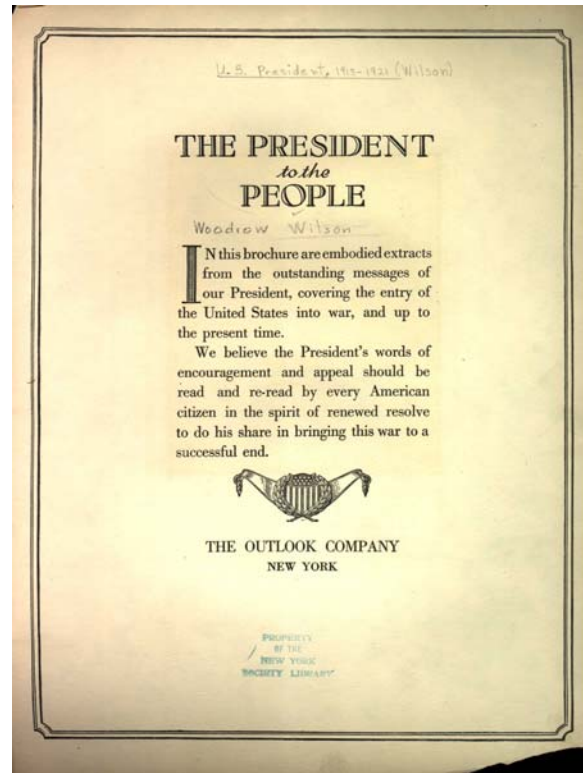
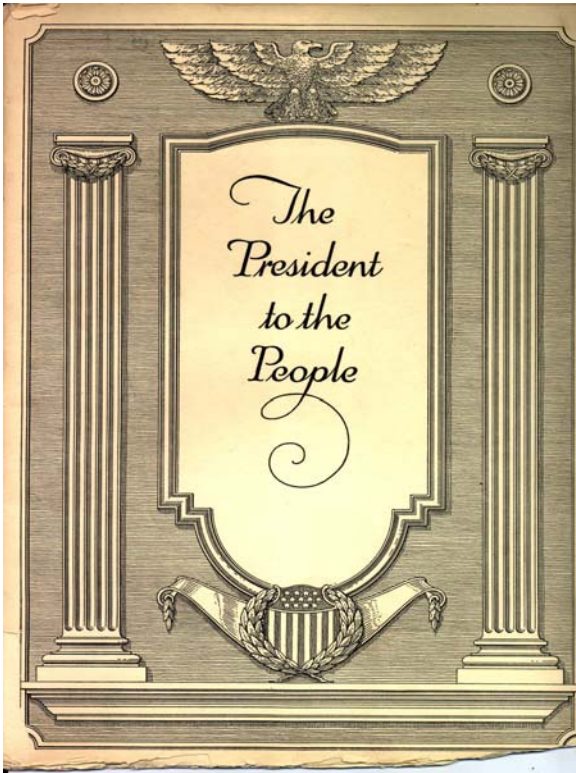
• First editions

The importance of a 'first edition' universally understood. However, as Mark Twain's *Life on the Mississippi* demonstrates, there can be various states and printings of a first edition. To make things more confusing, purists (and shrewd booksellers) intimidate lay people with the self-contradictory term 'pre-first', correctly qualified by John Carter as "symptomatic of the chronological obsession." This term is applied to advance copies, trial issues, pirated/ unauthorized editions (Trollope's *Miss McKenzie*), and so on. The application of this term should be taken into consideration with several grains of salt.



Scarcity can be a consequence of innumerable causes. A few basic ones are:

- Careless handling by humans
This first cause can be divided into 'innocent' and 'intentional.' Nikolai Gogol and Walt Whitman, among other authors, have destroyed their books in fits of artistic madness, thus the label 'innocent.' Intentional destruction includes the burning of the fabled library in Alexandria and (hopefully) ends with Iraq, as some of the more chilling expressions of 'intentional'. Finally, acts of God remain as a cause of destruction, or at least damage to collections, as recently witnessed in Louisiana.
- Unintentional destruction
Unintentional destruction seems to overlap with 'innocent' intentional destruction but really means lack of proper preservation measures and hence, comes from a devaluation of some forms of intellectual property and an ignorance of the importance of proper storage and handling. Most endangered are cookbooks, guidebooks, and children's books, as well as books with "superseded ideas".
- Progress in discipline/subject
These are often considered 'outdated' publications. One might not attach much importance to an old cookbook, and yet they are research sources not only for the culinary historians, but also economists, medical researchers (think of the ever-present lard used in the past), sociologists, etc. Similarly, old manuals or scientific-technical literature surely lose their application, but definitely retain value as retrospective and historical sources.



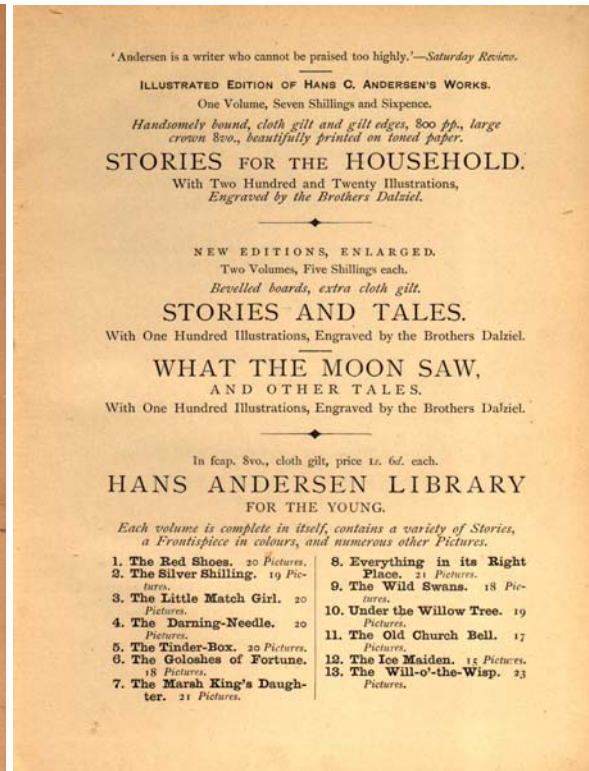
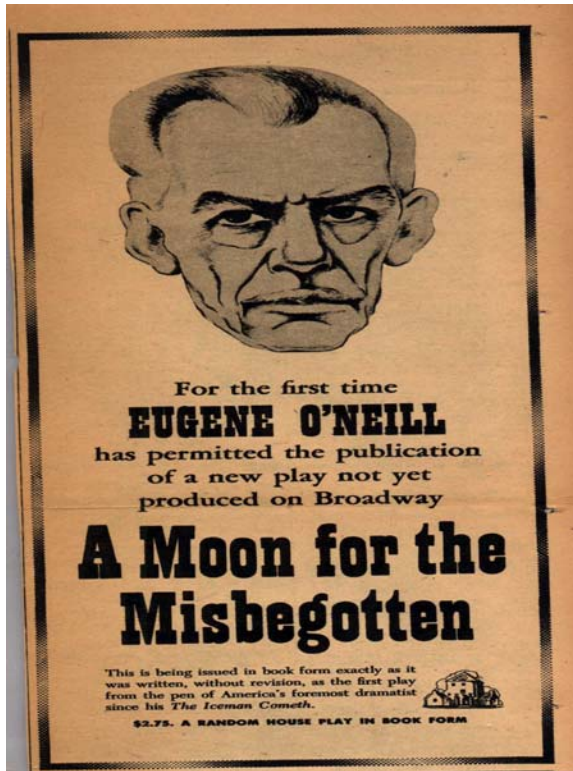
V: OCCASIONAL PUBLICATIONS:

President Wilson's *The President to the People*, New York, 1917-18.

- Occasional publications

There are many types of these publications. It is essentially impossible to collect and preserve all such publications, but some libraries make an attempt, if only in narrow subject areas. Groups of libraries will often divide responsibility for developing or maintaining historical collections. For example, the New York Public Library's Library of the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center collects Playbills and concert programs. The New-York Historical Society and our Library have a wealth of 19th century pamphlets and broadsides.

Figure V (above) is the title page of a collection of public addresses given by President Woodrow Wilson while in office, an excellent example of an unusual early 20th century publication held by the New York Society Library.

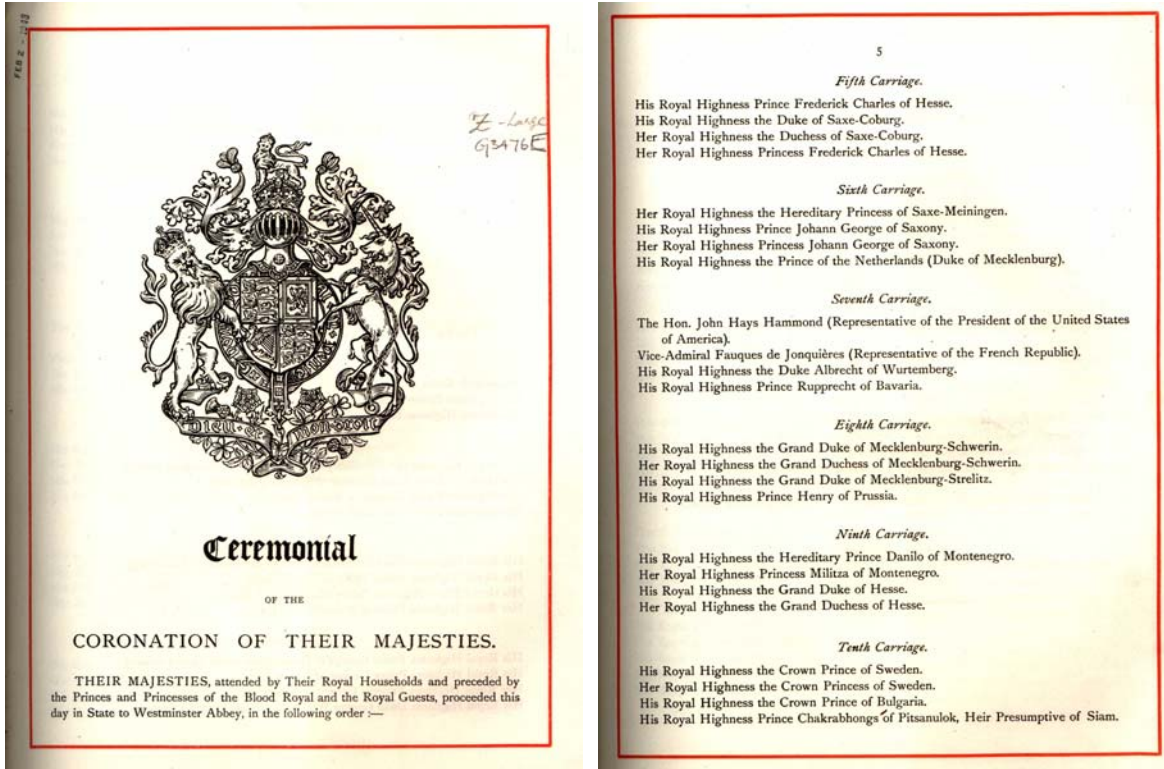


VI: EPHEMERA:

Newspaper Advertisement for Eugene O'Neill's *A Moon for the Misbegotten*. New York: Random House, 1952.

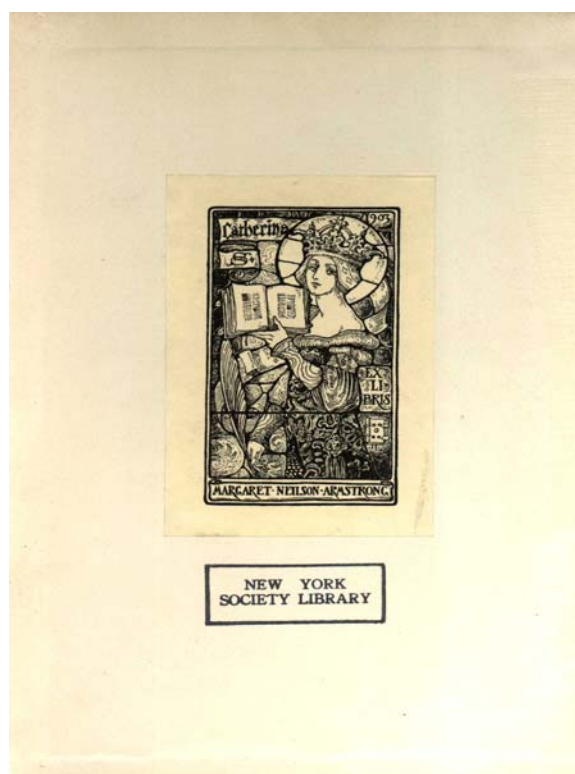
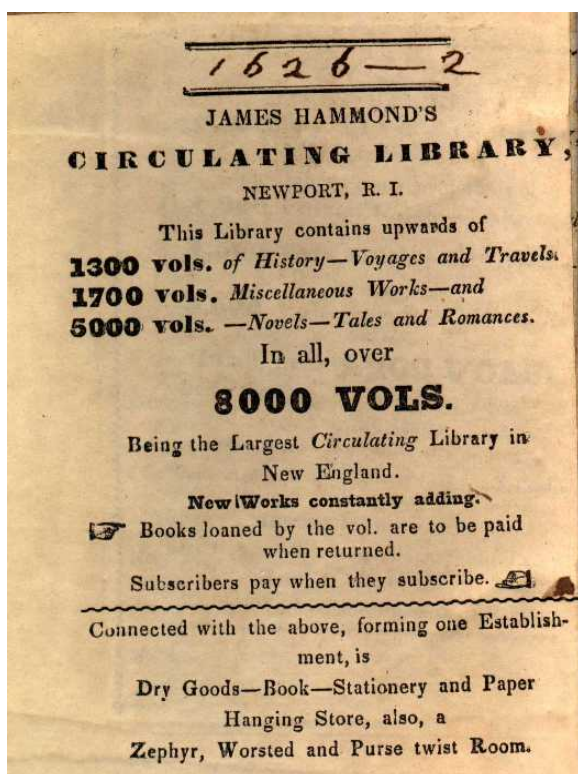
Publisher's Advertisement from H.W. Dulcken's *The Golden Harp*, London: Routledge, 1865.

- Ephemera
Ephemeral publications resemble occasional publications, the main difference being their local rather than a broad-based importance. This being said, historical ephemera is a distinctively important category collected and preserved by libraries everywhere. Examples of ephemeral publications are advertisements, menus, and notices containing information that might not be available elsewhere.
- Purposefully limited editions
Limited editions are marketed mainly to known book collectors. They can be either publishers' editions, printing houses' editions (e.g. Nonesuch Press), or intended to be a tribute to a particular author, work, or artist/illustrator. The Library holds a wealth of limited editions: we have titles issued by the Heritage Club, the Limited Editions Club, Nonesuch Press, the Hogarth Press, Riverside Press, De Vinne Press and numerous others.



**VII: UNINTENTIONALLY LIMITED EDITIONS:
Ceremonies Observed at the Royal Coronation
London, 1911.**

- Unintentionally limited editions
Unintentional limited editions are publications meant for limited distribution due to a perceived small target audience rather than an attempt to ensure scarcity. Typical examples would be of a particular corporate entity. Certain ministries in Russia used to print their annual reports in exactly three copies in appropriate bindings: royal for the Czar, armorial and monogrammed for the Grand Duke and black leather with gold lettering for the ministry archives. This category should not be confused with the occasional publications that are often limited to the number of intended audience: the membership or, in case of coronations, invited guests (see figure VII above).
- Casualties of time, conditions, human error
Time, physical conditions (Katrina included), and random judgment – as distinct from the aforementioned deliberate acts – can cause the destruction of books and printed matter. With the conviction that written word represents a record of the human experience, libraries have an important responsibility to preserve material that is known to be scarce or unique.

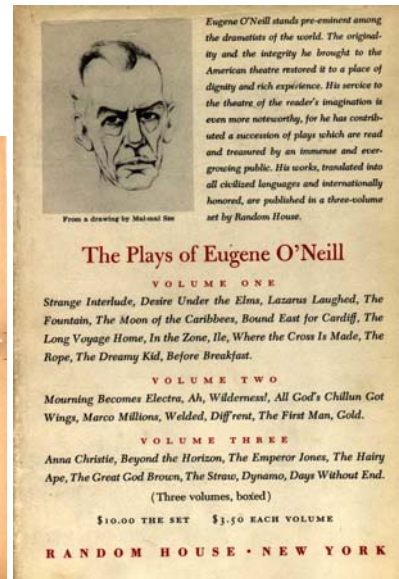
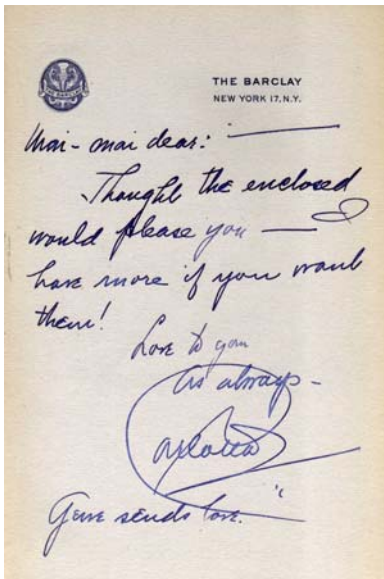
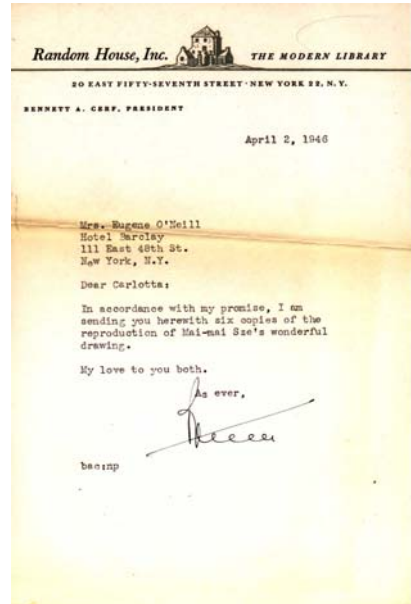
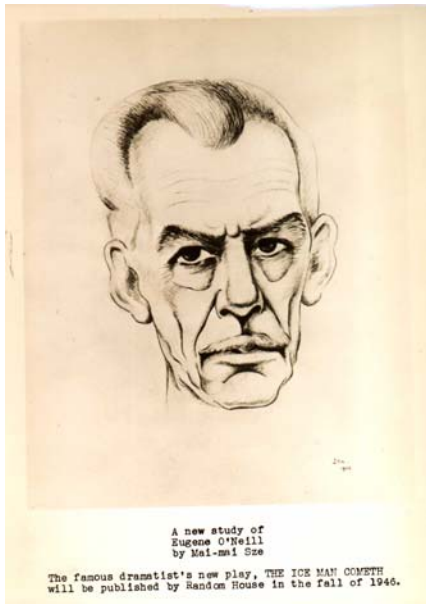


VIII: PROVENANCE

Advertisement for
 James Hammond's
 Circulation Library

Margaret Armstrong's Bookplate
 in NYSL copy of Paul Lawrence Dunbar's
Poems of Cabin and Field.
 New York: Dodd, Mead, 1900.

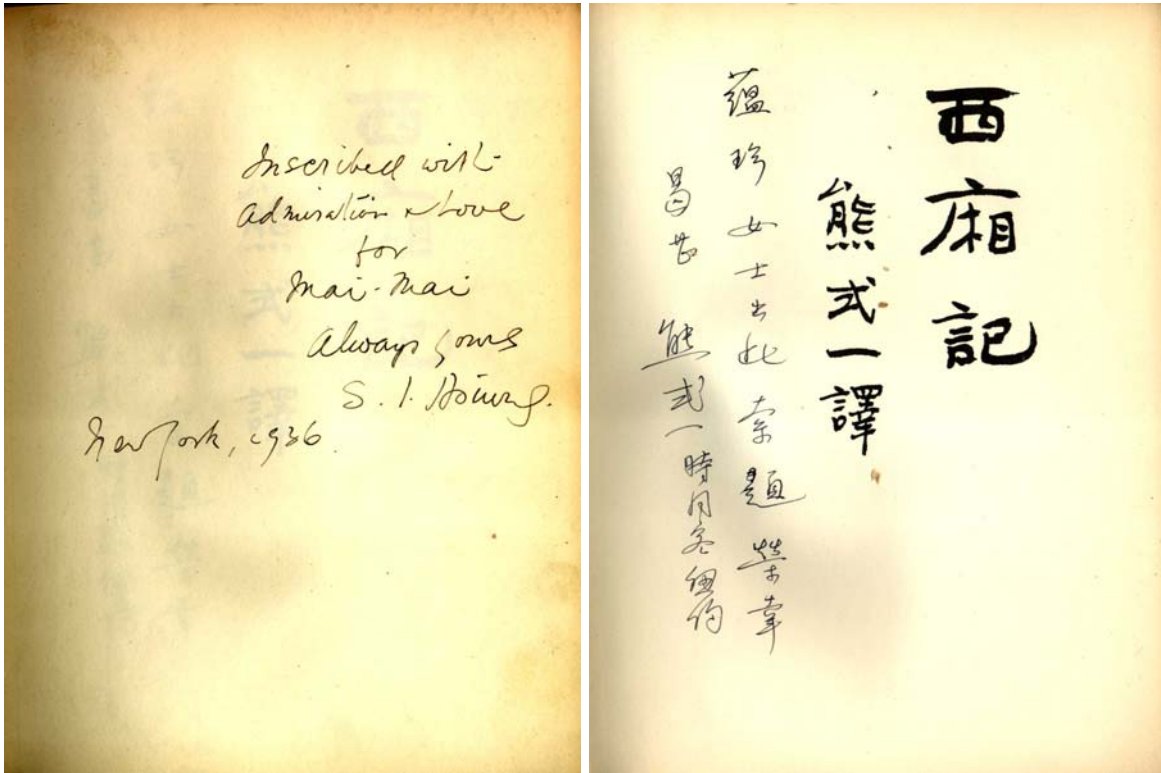
Provenance is a very important aspect of an item's overall value. No amount of effort should be spared in proper research in this matter. In the antiquarian book trade and in libraries, significant provenance considerably elevates the price and 'status' of a book. The New York Society Library has a number of titles with unique marks of ownership. Worthy of mention is The Hammond collection as an example of institutional provenance, constituting holdings of an early 19th century Rhode Island rental library. The Sharp and Winthrop collections are examples of individual's libraries. The Library traces some of its important titles to the collections of persons as diverse as John Dee, Mai-mai Sze, Sir Walter Scott, and Alfred Barr. This category often overlaps with the next one – association copies.



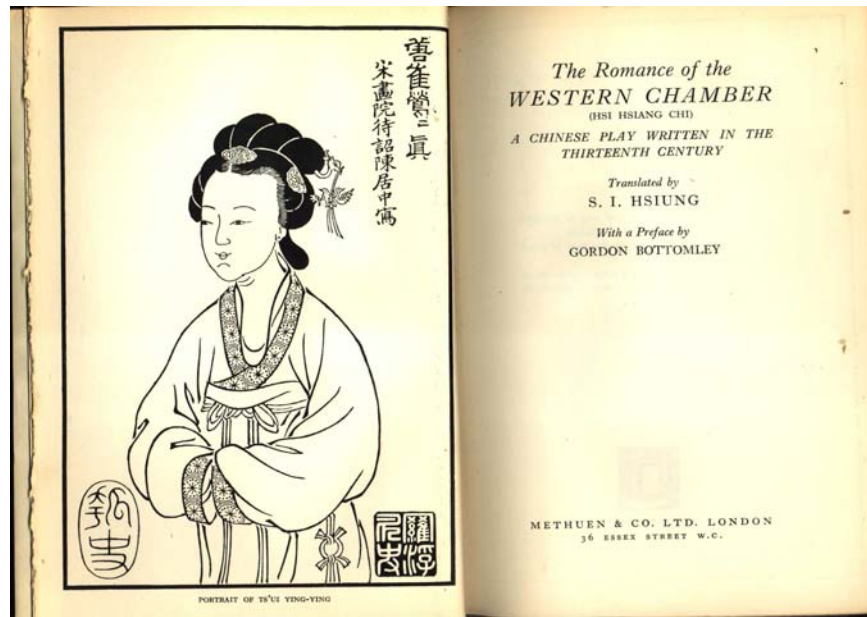
**IX: ASSOCIATION COPIES:
Portrait of Eugene O'Neill
by former NYSL member Mai-mai Sze**

Association copies bear a connection to:

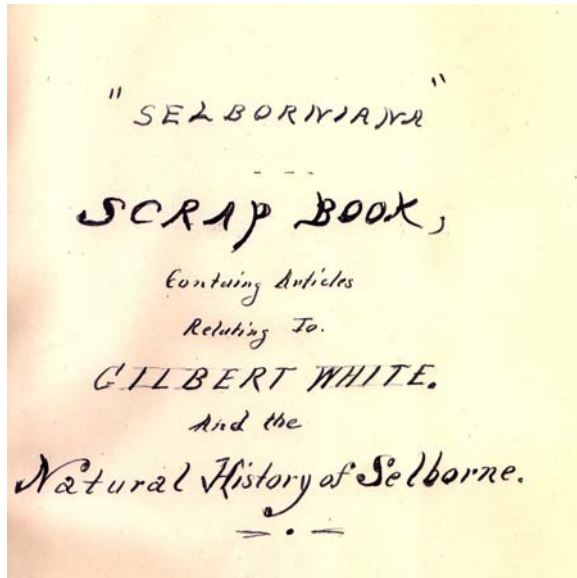
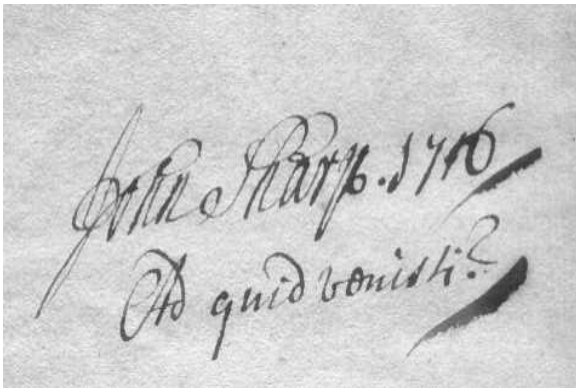
- Creators (authors, translators, illustrators, compilers, editors)
- Producers (publishers, printers)
- Designers (type designers, binding designers, binders)



X: ASSOCIATION COPIES
Inscription from Shih-I Hsiung to Mai-mai Sze
in NYSL copy of Wang Shih-fu's
***Romance of the Western Chamber*, dated 1936**



Evidence for this association is usually contained within the work; it can also be external (e.g. insertions) or inferred through another source.



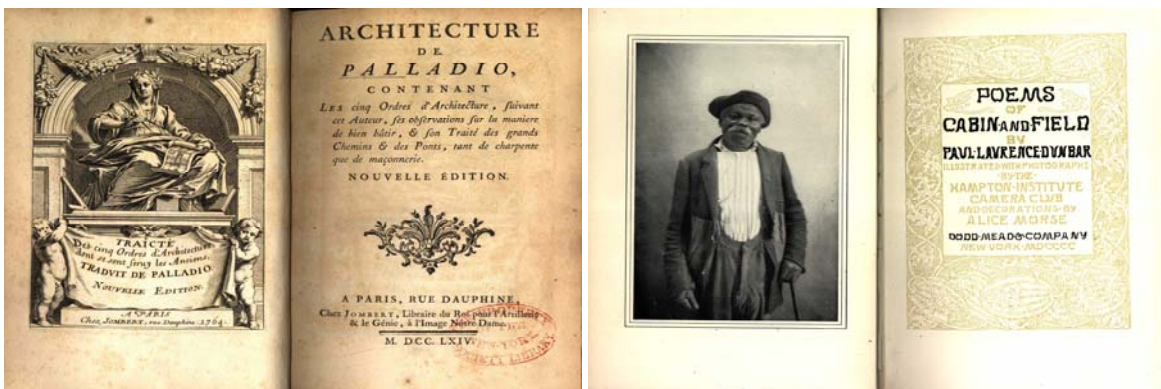
XI: ASSOCIATION COPIES

John Sharpe's signature

Pseudo-title page of "Selborniana scrap book".
New York: A. Pell, [1893-94?]

While the aesthetic value of a book is usually obvious, there is often a need for thorough bibliographical research to ensure accurate attribution. The usual areas of interest in the aesthetic value of a book are:

- Fine printing
- Special paper
- Illustrations
- Binding: design and execution
- Typefaces



XII: FINE PRINTING

Title page of Andrea Palladio's *Architecture de Palladio*.
Paris, 1764

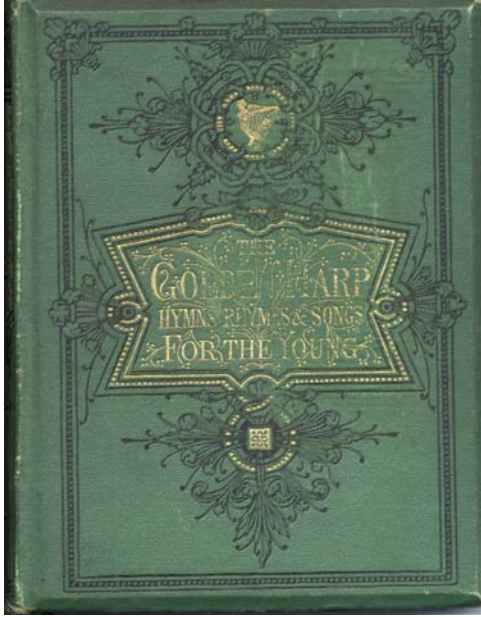
Title page of Paul Lawrence Dunbar's *Poems of Cabin and Field*.
New York: Dodd, Mead, 1900.



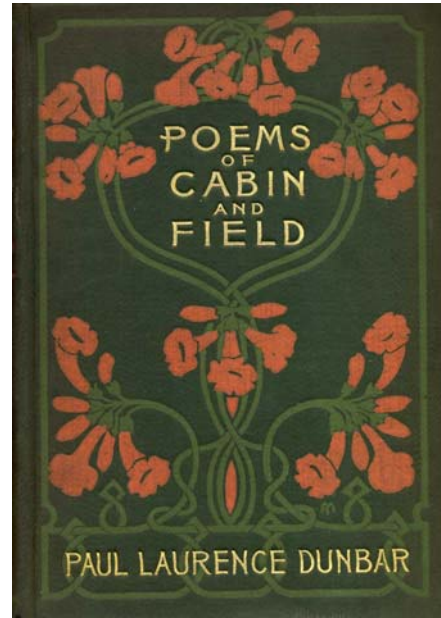
XIII: ILLUSTRATION
Detail of frontispiece in Desiderius Erasmus.
L'eloque de la folie (Moriae Encomium). Paris, 1751.



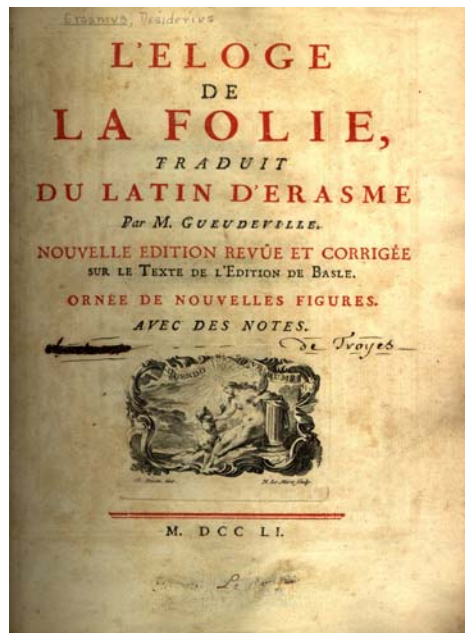
XIV: ILLUSTRATION
From Franz Masereel's *Mein Stundenbuch*,
Munich, K. Wolff, 1928.



XV: BINDING
Cover of H.W. Dulcken's
The Golden Harp,
London: Routledge, 1865



XV: BINDING
Cover of Paul Lawrence Dunbar's
Poems of Cabin and Field.
New York: Dodd, Meade, 1900.



XVI: TYPEFACE
Title Page of Desiderius Erasmus.
L'eloge de la folie (Moriae Encomium). Paris, 1751.

The New York Public Library, Columbia University Library and a number of other libraries in the U.S. have, and continue to build, artists' books collections.

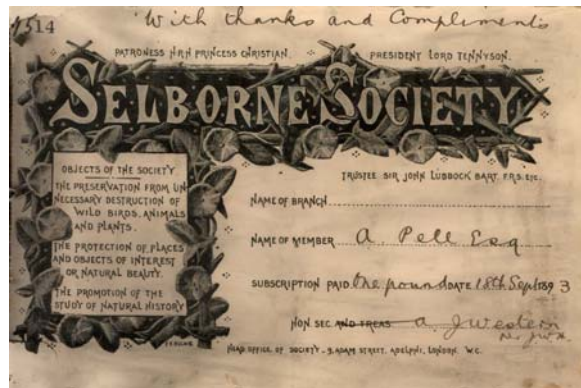
Within the category of bibliographical oddities are those self-created books (not to be confused with artists' books) that are created for a single person or event. Some other important categories of oddities are:

- Unique entities
- Topical scrapbooks
- Bespoke bindings, regardless to their quantity, made solely for the owner. Grolier, Richelieu and royal are more celebrated examples of this group.

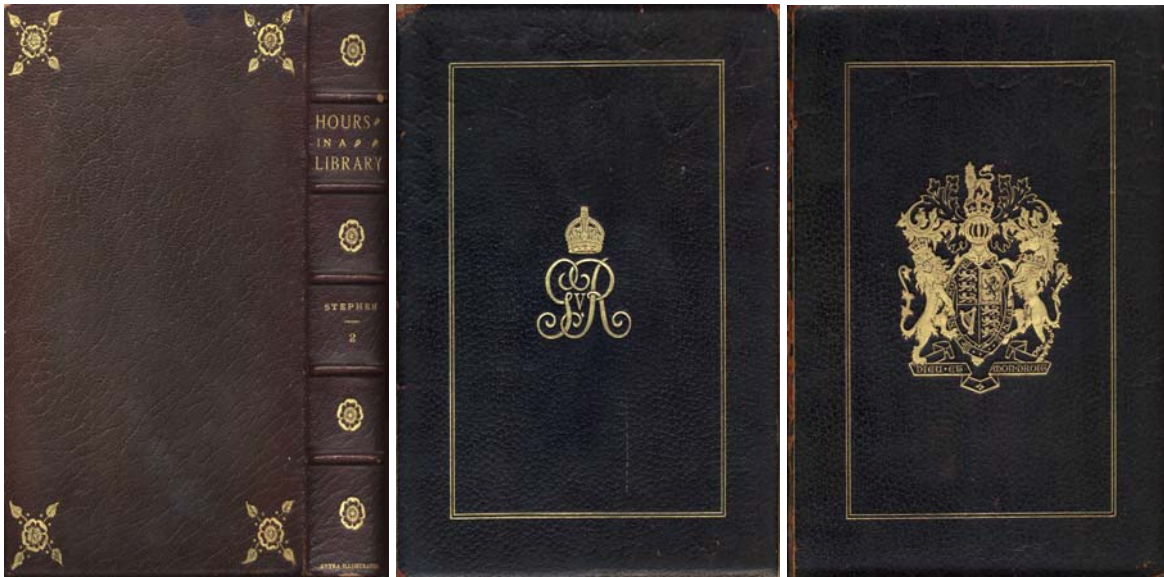


XVII: UNIQUE ENTITIES
Francis James Child.

"Il Pesceballo": The Fishball Operetta



XVIII: TOPICAL SCRAPBOOKS
Selborniana scrap book.
New York: A. Pell, [1893-94?]



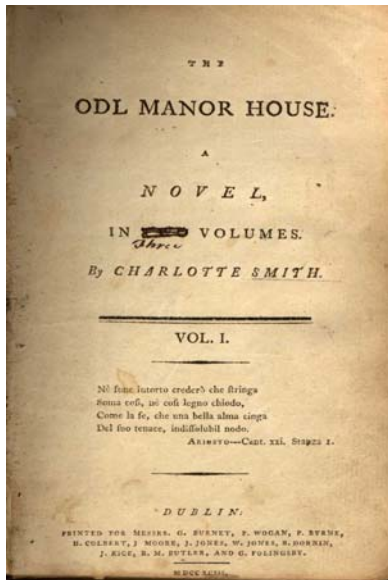
XIX: BESPOKE BINDINGS

Sir Leslie Stephen's *Hours in a Library*.

New York: London: Putnam's; Smith, Elder, 1899 & more.

Anomalies and points make a copy (or a number of copies) distinct from the rest of the edition. Distinctions can be caused either by the production process or simple human error. Akin to those rare postage stamps that have printing errors, books with distinctive features attract attention and increase their desirability for collectors. Common distinctions include but are not limited to:

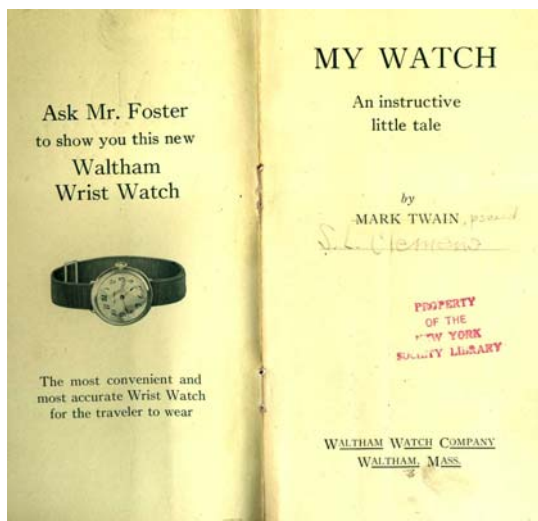
- Broken type
- Misprints
- Altered printing
- Unexpected production



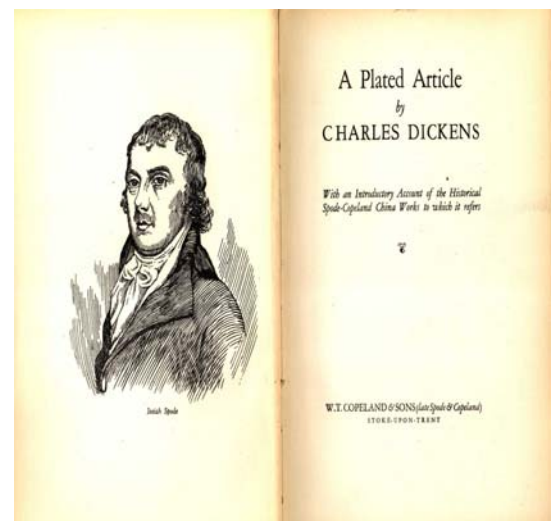
XX: MISPRINTS
Title Page from Charlotte Smith
Turner's *The Old Manor House*.
Dublin, 1793.



XXI: ALTERED PRINTINGS
Tailpiece from Mark Twain's
Life on the Mississippi.
Boston: J. Osgood, 1883.

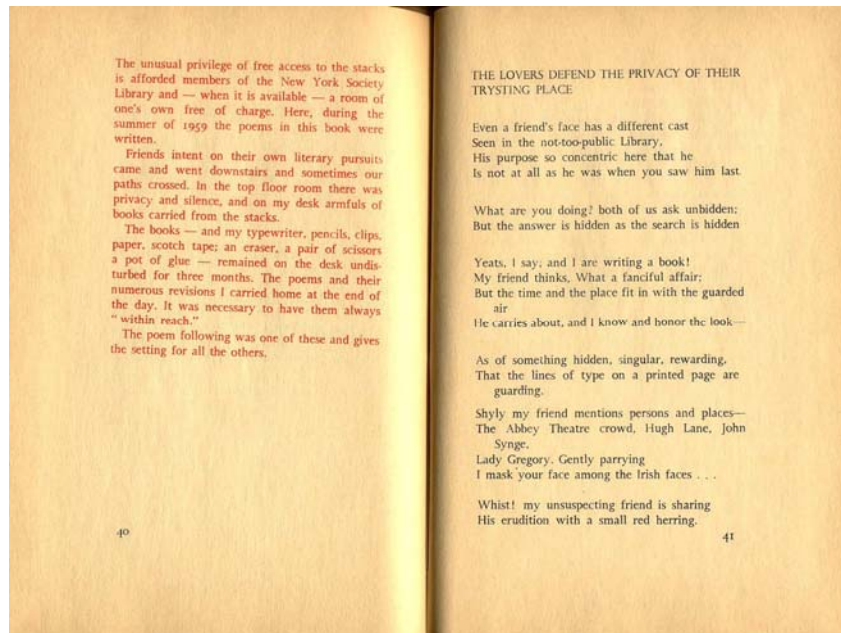
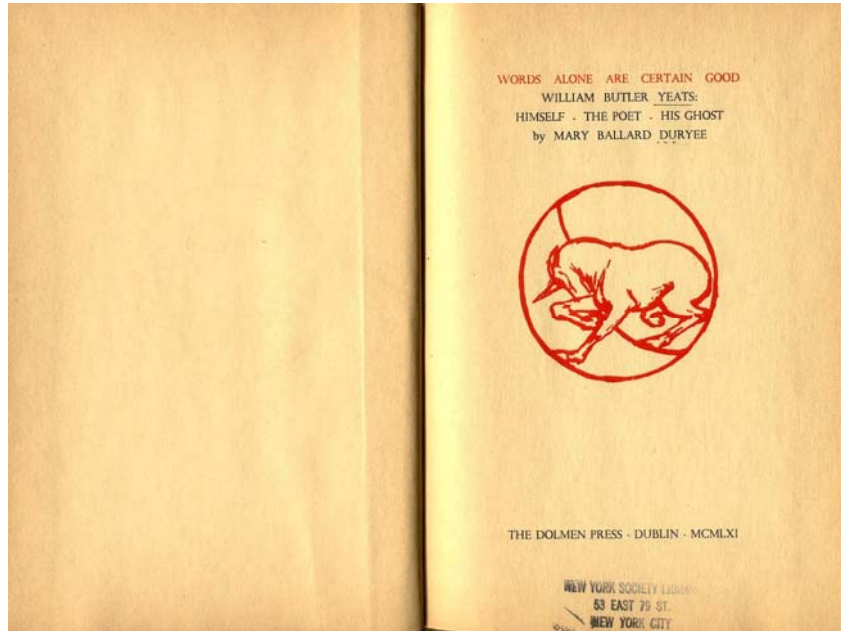


XXII: UNEXPECTED PRODUCTION
Mark Twain's *My Watch*.
Waltham, Mass.: Waltham Watch Co., [1918?]



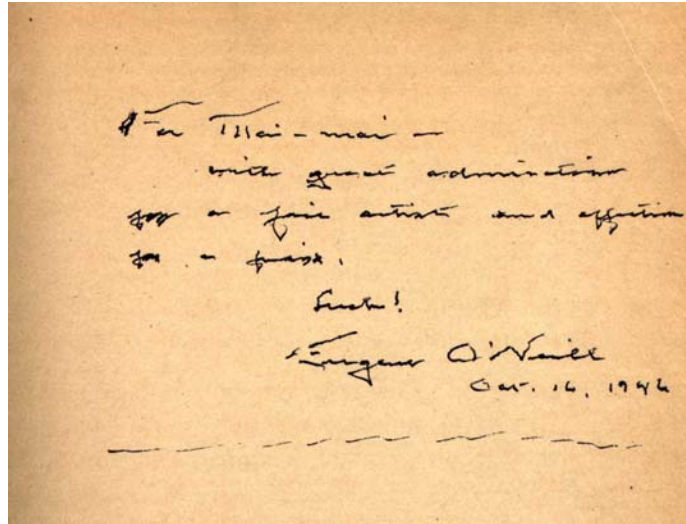
XXII: UNEXPECTED PRODUCTION
Charles Dickens' *A Plated Article*.
Stoke-upon-Trent: W. T. Copeland, [1930?]

Library-specific materials that are designated as rare in large libraries comprise what are usually called 'special collections.' Individual books within a special collection may not possess objective qualifications for rarity, but they do possess some collective feature that is important for a specific library. Such qualities can be their subject matter; or it may be that they represent an institutional, named or personal collection. The New York Society Library has several subject collections, including the Winthrop collection, which features 17th century works of science and pseudo-science, and alchemy. The Library also makes it a point to continuously focus on New York City history and reference, 19th century fiction, and the institution's own archives and awarded books.



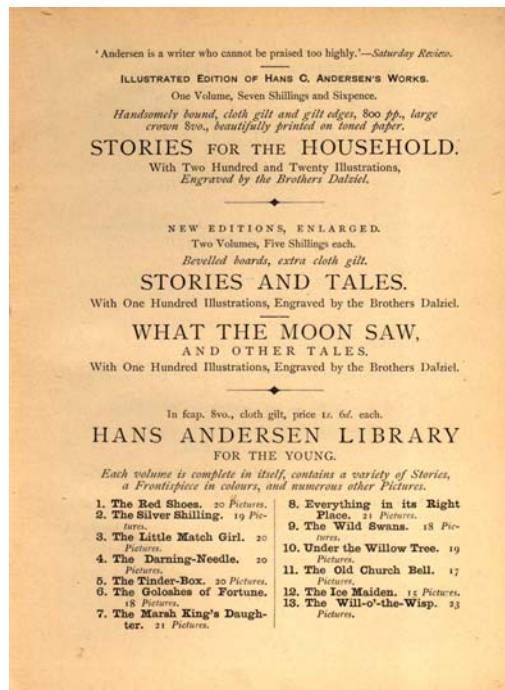
XXIII: LIBRARY-SPECIFIC MATERIALS
William Butler Yeats. *Words Alone are Certain Good.*

There are a few books to which none of the above categories apply, and yet they are considered rare. These are **copy-specific rarities**; often they are also association copies. Some of the features of 'important copies,' as they are often referred to by antiquarian booksellers, are annotations and/or corrections by a known person; informative notations; personalization other than the conventional (ex-libris, signature); and insertions. The latter might include reviews, correspondence, advertisements, announcements, receipts and the like.



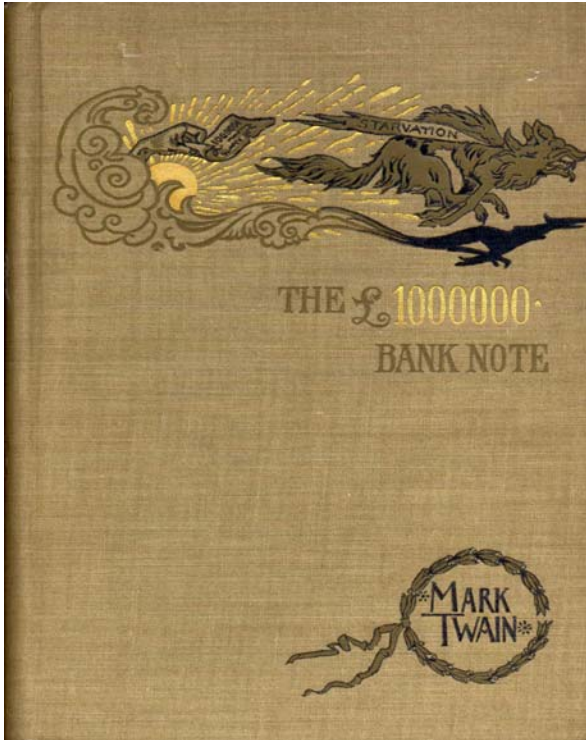
XXIV: ASSOCIATION COPY

From Eugene O'Neill to Mai-mai Sze, dated October 16, 1946, in NYSL copy of his *The Iceman Cometh*



XXV: COPY-SPECIFIC RARITIES

Advertisement bound in H. W. Dulcken's *The Golden Harp*.
London: Routledge, 1865.



3436. THE £1,000,000 BANK-NOTE AND OTHER NEW STORIES BY MARK TWAIN

NEW YORK CHARLES L. WEBSTER & COMPANY
1893

<1>-260; blank leaf; advertisements, pp. <1>-9. Frontispiece inserted. 7⁵/₈" x 5³/₈".

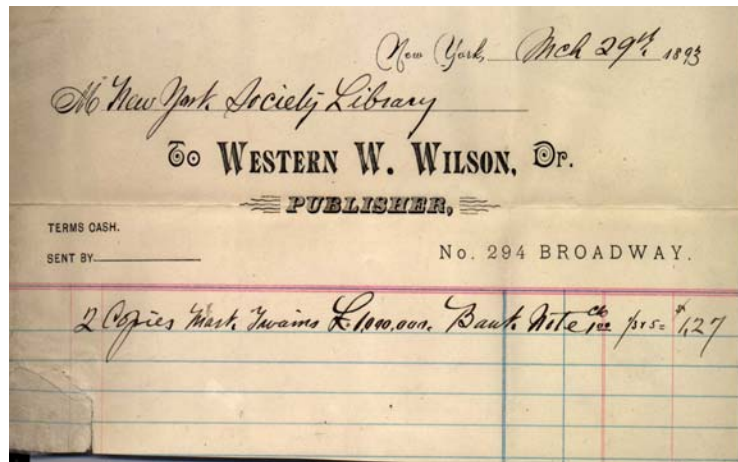
<1-17>⁸.

V cloth: tan. Flyleaf at back. Also issued in brown skiver.

Advertised among the *latest trade books* PW April 15, 1893. Listed PW April 29, 1893. The London (Chatto & Windus) edition was published on April 28, 1893 (publisher's statement); listed Ath April 29, 1893. The Leipzig (Tauchnitz) edition has been seen with the back wrapper dated October, 1893 but with inserted catalog dated May, 1893.

XXV: COPY-SPECIFIC RARITIES

Cover of Mark Twain's *The Million Pound Bank-note*.
New York: C. Webster, 1893.



XXV: COPY-SPECIFIC RARITIES

NYSL receipt for purchase of
Mark Twain's *The Million Pound Bank-note*,
Dated March 29, 1893.

To conclude, every Library member can assist in our collection development by considering the Library's needs when weeding a personal library. Gifts and bequests constantly enrich the existing profile and scope of the Library's collections. In addition, be sure to always use library material with care and please bring damaged copies to the attention of the staff.

