March 1959

Some Recent Acquisitions

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.colby.edu/cq

Recommended Citation
Colby Library Quarterly, series 5, no.1, March 1959, p.14-16
than those of the present reporter; and if it be thought that this evidence from a small college library is neither typical nor representative, let me add that the copy in the Harvard University Library has been charged out to readers only ten times in twelve years. No wonder the weeds continue to grow in the Persian garden! No wonder fiction is quoted as “fact” and no wonder (as was stated on the first page of this article) “the bustle in the house of the literary historian as he prepares for the arrival of the year 1959 is . . . [and has to be] noticeable and . . . emphatic . . .”

SOME RECENT ACQUISITIONS

In the February 1958 issue of this quarterly, the editor remarked: “Won’t some good friend of the Colby Library find a copy of the second Amphora volume [selections from the later catalogues of Thomas Bird Mosher] . . . and . . . present it to the Library?” Our invitation has been accepted. Thanks to the prompt and generous efforts of Dr. Frederic E. Camp (a member of the Board of Trustees), the Library now boasts a mint copy of Amphora No. 2, one of the 925 copies printed in 1926. As a frontispiece it carries the portrait of Mosher of which Dr. Frederick A. Pottle spoke in his address to the Library Associates in April 1958, and we are happy in finding among the contents of the volume two contributions by Colby graduates: (1) the tribute to Mosher by Harry Lyman Koopman, ’80 (pages 98-99), and (2) the glowing account of Mosher by Dr. Pottle, ’17 (pages 115-126). This gift from Dr. Camp is a perfect illustration of those features of Mosher’s books to which Dr. Pottle called attention in the last three sentences of his affectionate tribute to the Portland publisher: “Every book he made a work of art, lavishing on it every attention to make it perfect in size and shape, in texture of
paper, in type, in binding. And these exquisite things he sold for the price of ordinary books. He was, in these days of quantity production and cheap manufacture, a craftsman and an artist, a true disciple of Aldus, whose anchor and dolphins he placed upon his title pages.” We are indeed happy to be able to add this second *Amphora* to our Mosher Collection.

To Mrs. Terry Martin, of Stillwater, Oklahoma, the Library is indebted for a copy of the first edition (London, 1881) of *The Love Sonnets of Proteus*. When this book first appeared, it was published anonymously, but ten years later, when William Morris printed a new edition at the newly established Kelmscott Press, the poems were identified as the work of Wilfred Scawen Blunt. This was the third book produced by Morris at the Kelmscott Press; he made only 300 copies. This was the only book in which Morris printed the big initial letters in red ink, and the explanation was given later that this unique feature among Kelmscott products was the result of a request from W. S. Blunt himself. The original edition was a modestly printed product of the Chiswick Press in London, wholly lacking in color except on the cream-colored cloth binding, which carries decorations in blue. The author, Wilfred Scawen Blunt (1840-1922), is not widely known today, but half a century ago he was a notorious figure in British public life. His political writings were vigorous performances in defence of nationalism, whether Egyptian or Indian or Irish, and many recent political movements and changes in the Middle East have been entirely in tune with Blunt’s views. His poetry was equally the product of an outspoken and vehement personality, and no reader of the book which Mrs. Martin has given to Colby will have any difficulty understanding why its author chose to publish it anonymously. The Kelmscott Press edition announces that it includes “many sonnets omitted from the earlier edition” of 1881.
Mrs. Martin has also made Colby a present of a copy of Laurence Housman’s poem *Cynthia*, published in 1947 by Sidgwick & Jackson, one of 500 copies printed by the Alcuin Press and signed by Housman on the colophon page. Mrs. Martin’s gift is accompanied by two autograph letters of Laurence Housman, one dated May 25, 1948, and one dated November 1, 1953. Once again, we can only regret our lack of space for quoting these letters.

The Library is indebted to Mr. George Forbes Hughes of Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts, for a mint copy of Kenneth Roberts’ posthumous book, *Cowpens: The Great Morale-Builder*, with a Foreword by Herbert F. West of Dartmouth College. The book sent us by Mr. Hughes is Copy No. 174 of an edition limited to four hundred copies, printed by Edgecombe Printer, Kalamazoo, Michigan, and published in 1957 by Westholm Publications.

From Dr. Stephen A. Larrabee the Library has received a beautifully printed small folio entitled *The Last Letter of Mary Queen of Scotland addressed to her brother in law Henry III King of France on the night before her execution at Fotheringay Castle 8th February 1587*. This attractive book, bound in royal purple cloth, is Copy No. 231 of five hundred numbered copies printed by H. Gage-Cole in Baskerville type at the Swan Press, Chelsea, London, in 1927.

The editor of these pages cannot end this record of the most recent gifts to the Library without recalling the “Album Benefactorum” which is kept on view in the famous Bodleian Library at Oxford. This Register of Benefactors was begun in 1600 under the personal care of Sir Thomas Bodley. The Latin *Statutes* of the University, written in 1610 when Shakespeare was still alive, provided that this Register of Benefactors should be kept up to date and *always exposed to view*, both as a mark of gratitude to benefactors and as an encouragement to others who might be ready to follow them. Let those who read here our partial list of men and women who have enriched the Colby College Library show themselves “ready to follow them.”