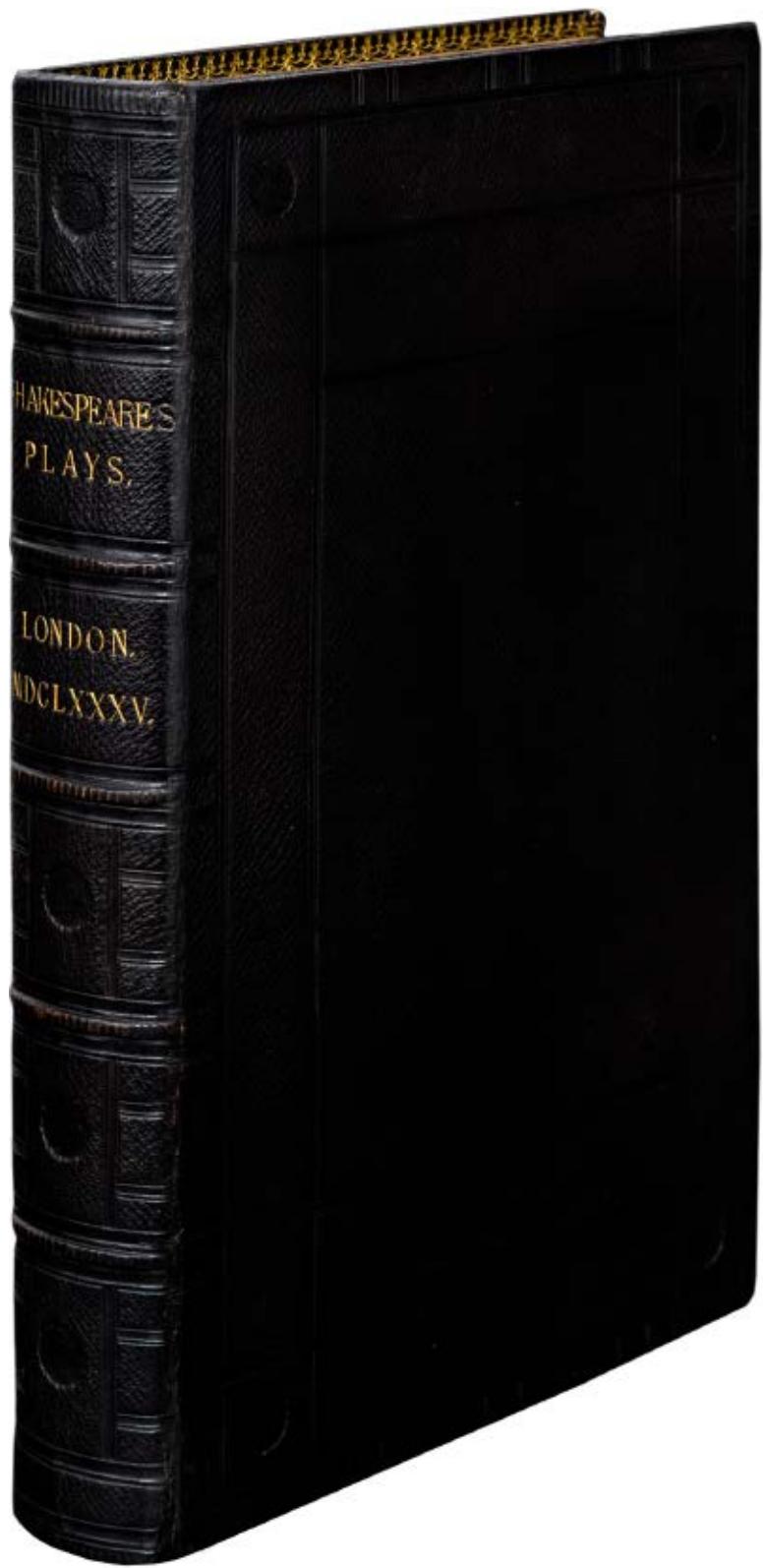


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Shakespeare's Comedies, Histories and Tragedies, page 78

Biblioctopus

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Plagiarism: New words examine old perspectives and vice versa, so attributed quotations are in quotation marks, but because I am creatively inadequate, disparate pithy aphorisms, coy similes, wry epigrams, and dry metaphors, are stolen, kidnapped, plagiarized, embezzled, and pillaged from everywhere and everyone, then corrupted, inverted, fused, combined, debauched, and misemployed, all for your happy reading.

Illustrations: Photography is accomplished with a 24 megapixel Leica digital camera and Leica lenses that convey a straightforward view of the item. Nothing has been intentionally positioned to hide its failings, the associated text candidly describes the item itself, not just the deficiencies peculiar to, and obvious in, the picture, and those items, or sides of items, that are not illustrated, have their flaws articulated with special clarity.

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DANISH FAIRY LEGENDS
AND TALES

HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN

EDITION

**Catalog 51 is conceitedly dedicated
to the memory of the great John F. Fleming**

Andersen, Hans Christian

Danish Fairy Legends and Tales
(London, 1852).

1st edition in English of this collection of 45 tales, preceded by a dozen or so English and American translations commencing in 1845, most of them gathering 7–12 stories, including a 14 story edition under the same title, rationalizing the publisher's (Addey & Co.) reasoning for calling this book the "second enlarged edition" and causing some collectors to squint at it like a side dish they didn't order. But our edition's translation, by Caroline Peachey, is from Andersen's original Dutch (not the French, as most previous translations were), it contains the first comprehensive amalgamation of the fairy tales Andersen had written up until that time, and so, it is the 1st edition in English that includes all of his greatest stories, The Little Mermaid, The Constant Tin Soldier, The Red Shoes, The Snow Queen, Tommelise (Thumbelina), The Emperor's New Clothes, The Little Match Girl, The Real Princess (The Princess and the Pea), The Ugly Duckling, The Rose Elf, The Tinder-Box, The Nightingale, and 33 others. The range is impressive and yet, like gossipy neighbors sharing the same clothesline, chatting hearsay while hanging out their things, and so getting their laundry confused, and thereby exposing its resemblance, almost all of them illume Andersen's recurring theme, the psychic wounds of childhood. Publisher's brown cloth, original owner's name to front free end-paper, very good, providential condition for such a fragile book, and this copy of this edition should satisfy any collector's desire for a representative Hans Andersen, as the alternatives are the small flock of marginally earlier editions, which, even cumulatively, will not replicate the contents of this one. Or you can skip Andersen entirely, and just punch up 32123332223773212333322321 on your telephone and beep yourself a round of Mary Had a Little Lamb. 500

There is a canon that governs what is, and what is not, a fairy tale, and further there are tenets directing the substance, structure and aims. This may well be another instance of bookseller Icarus flying too close to the Sun, but by my understanding of those canons and tenets, and how they are effectively applied, my nominee for the perfect fairy tale is The Ugly Duckling, in a solemn procession of one. Technically, it's a beast-fable, but other than the talking animals, it has no magic and no fantastic creatures. It is unquestionably autobiographical, speaks to the spirit of inner beauty, advocates the need to overcome hardship, and surveys the heartbreak, sometimes futile search for unconditional love.

And 1 more thing, just to connect Andersen's time to our own. Fairy tales used to begin "Once upon a time..." Now they begin, "Hi, this is my profile..." And, by the way, modern horror tales now begin, "Side effects may include..."



her first book

Austen, Jane

Sense and Sensibility
(London, 1811).

3 vols. 1st edition, whispering in a voice quieter than decency, that the days that make us happy are the days that set us free. 19th century 3/4 morocco. A fine set, cleaner than fresh air, and it's a complete one too with all 3 genuine half-titles, and though this 1st edition is regularly stalked by all collectors, it has a history of amplified appeal to those who are women, so heed this ladies: Buying a 1st edition of Sense and Sensibility without authentic half-titles is more dangerous than open-knife night at the blow fish bar, and more naïve than sexting your face and your kitty in the same picture. Ex-3 significant women collectors (bookplates) of élan who deserve snaps, Dorothy Stewart, Pamela Kingzett, and Sarah Peter, the last named of the 3, a modern goddess who gathered her 1st editions of fiction in English by women, 1 book at a time, and now stands tall with the greatest collection of them ever assembled. By anyone. Anywhere. **65,000**

Austen invented modern romantic comedy beginning with *Sense and Sensibility*, and started schooling 7 generations of readers about the intricate convolutions of affection. What they learned from it right away is that all tests of love end badly, that excitement and familiarity are hard to find in one person, that the first duty of love is to listen, and that when the heart speaks, the mind should know it's tacky to object. In the 20th century they came to understand that the only real proof of love is trust, that sometimes there are more differences within the genders than between them, that love must be transformed from the flame at first into the light that lasts, and that all men fall somewhere between apes and gods, and the best a wise woman can hope to do, is pick one that's traveling in the right direction. Now we're in the 21st century and a new generation of readers just balance Austen's charm against the realities of daily life, appreciating that "desperate" is not a sexual preference, that the fastest way to improve a relationship is to see love as a verb rather than a feeling, and that a woman can find a blunt equality with men by going to therapy, where she can talk about herself for an hour, just like a guy on a date.

SENSE
AND
SENSIBILITY:
A NOVEL.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY A LADY.

VOL. I.

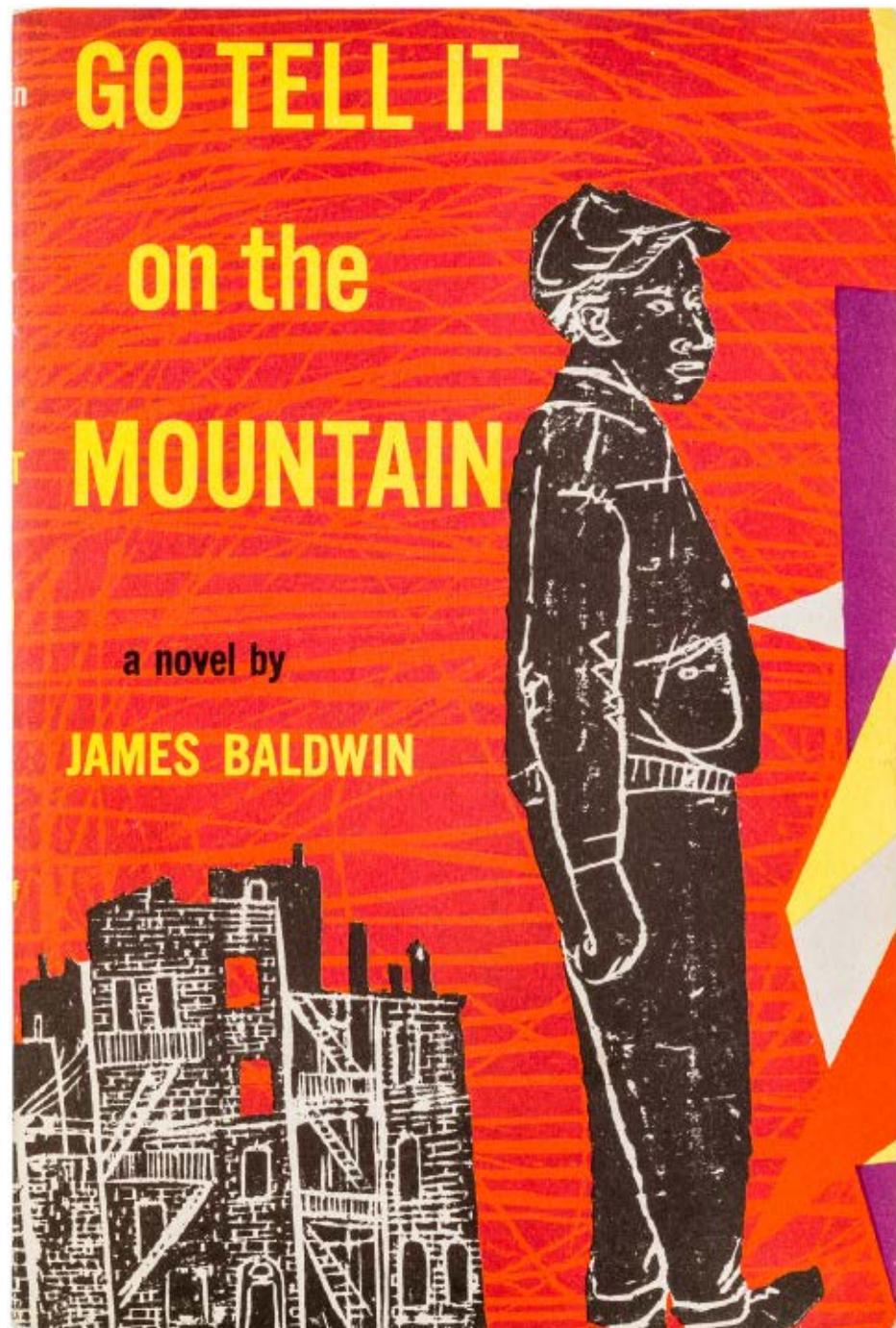
London:

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR,

By C. Roworth, Bell-yard, Temple-bar,

AND PUBLISHED BY T. EGERTON, WHITEHALL.

1811.



signed by Baldwin

Baldwin, James

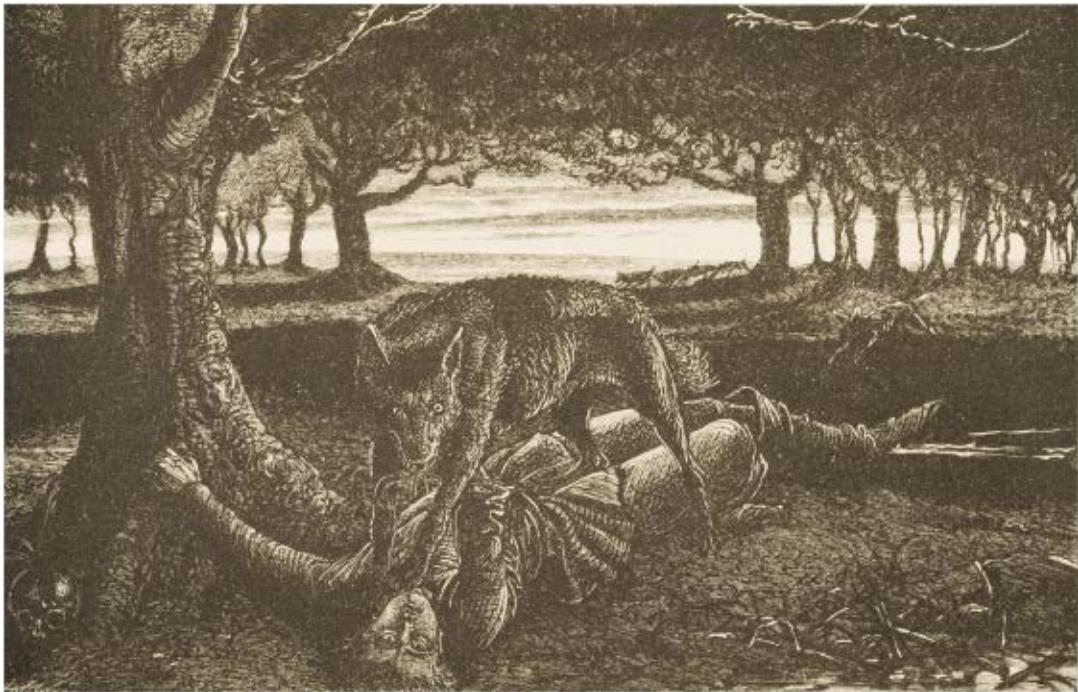
Go Tell it on the Mountain
(NY, 1953).

Advance issue of the 1st edition. His first book. Wrappers with 1 short crease to a back corner, 2 minuscule corner rubs else fine, with no fading even to the spine.

An unanticipated well-kept copy of a delicate book, intentionally manufactured with longevity scenarios in mind approximating the life-cycle of a Kentucky chicken. **Signed by Baldwin in ink.** Only 1 signed copy of this issue has sold at auction in the last 30 years (Christie's, \$7,200 in 2002) and though fine, signed copies are scarce in wrappers, they're not as scarce as the auction record suggests. **4,500**

James Baldwin was born in Harlem in 1924, and never knew his biological father. Like John Grimes (the protagonist in *Go Tell it on the Mountain*), Baldwin grew up under the puritanical supervision of a religious stepfather, David Baldwin, who, like John Grimes' father Gabriel, was a Baptist lay preacher. David Baldwin's mother had been a slave who left the South, but took many of her psychological scars with her, and generously passed them on to her son, so the father-son conflict, central to the novel, draws on the similarly crippling paternal antagonism and filial hatred in Baldwin's real life. James attended New York public schools, where he worked on school publications and was bolstered by the praise and encouragement he received for his reading and writing. Like his character John, James experienced a religious conversion at the age of 14 (or maybe it was a convenient conversion to appease a loopy father who took every paper-cut as a stigmata). He became a minister at Fireside Pentecostal Assembly, preached there for 3 years, then abandoned the charade once he had turned 18 and graduated. Beginning in 1942, he took several day labor jobs, gathered some loot, and moved to Greenwich Village where he could live cheap and write. In 1944 he met Richard Wright (the author of *Native Son*), who read Baldwin's working manuscript of an autobiographical novel, liked it, and recommended the 20 year old for a grant. Baldwin won the grant, but a string of publishers rejected the draft (behind publishers' swaggering façade of competence, lies every type of dubiousness). Determined to live out loud, he moved to Paris in 1948 and spent the next 5 years in France and Switzerland, working on his novel while writing essays of criticism, some of which got published in American journals. Finally, after 10 years of writing, rewriting, reshaping, and polishing (revising words and deleting paragraphs), Knopf accepted *Go Tell it on the Mountain* for publication in 1952. They commissioned the dustjacket art seen here (a fair depiction of what was described in the story), and then used it on the advance copies, but when Baldwin got a look at it, he insisted that it be suppressed as too graphic, and too stereotypical, so a softer, happier, cartoon-like art was substituted for the dustjacket on the 1st edition.

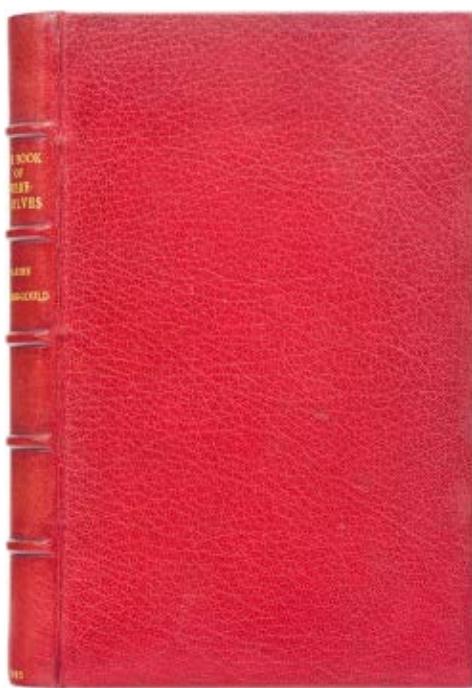
Here is literature, rough as candor and simple as hunger, in its role as a Distant Early Warning System, telling the Bestseller List (one of our culture's empty, incidental necessities of exhibitionism) what is going to happen, and this is also another case where the academics got it right, and the public eventually heeded them, and trailed along. Our copy is what you'd want, that hard to find confederacy of first book, major novel, signature of the author, striking (abandoned) artwork, and yes, exceptional condition, that enviable combination of integrities always admired, often desired, but usually forsaken in the fatigue of unrewarded pursuit.



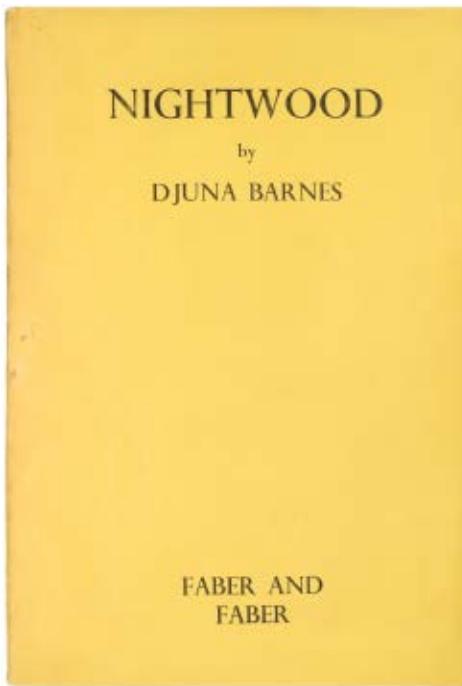
Baring-Gould, Sabine

**The Book of Were-Wolves:
Being an Account of a Terrible Superstition**
(London, 1865).

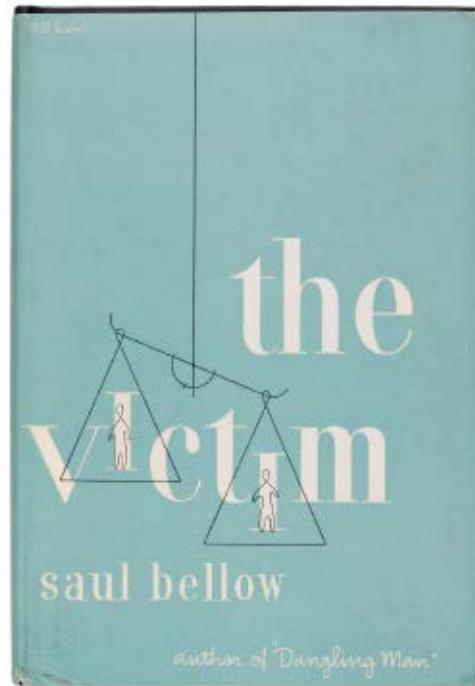
1st edition of the first book devoted to the werewolf, systematically collecting legends, folklore, hearsays and tales, from scattered cultures and multiple centuries. Still in print, and still a fundamental source, because no one has done it better. Full red morocco (signed by Riviere), complete with the frontispiece and the half-title. Fine condition, sharper than a headsman's ax. A 1st edition that's hardly ever seen for sale, and it's fun, and it's cool, and Baring-Gould is soaring again, on the heated thermals of were-wolf buzz. **2,250**



There are 2 kinds of truth. The truth of clarification and the truth of reassurance. This book provides neither, because it isn't the truth. And though it is curious, it's also ludicrous, because like all supernatural theories, it cannot withstand an attack on the facts at its point of greatest astonishment.



Barnes, Djuna



Nightwood
(London, 1936).

Uncorrected proof of the 1st edition, and proofs of *Nightwood* are rarer than someone who is passionate about a cause and isn't boring about it. Original wrappers, near fine (a few tiny spots, about the same size as the period that ends this sentence). **1,000**

Djuna Barnes, like a kind of political orator with a gallant madness, drafted the edgiest ideas of her time in the ruling popular form, in this case a lauded modernist novel, of some serious cult status. But time passes and 3 generations later, collectors are divided, either revering her as an archetype, or entirely rebuffing the melodies of modernism as reading that feels like work, so see her modern as their passé.

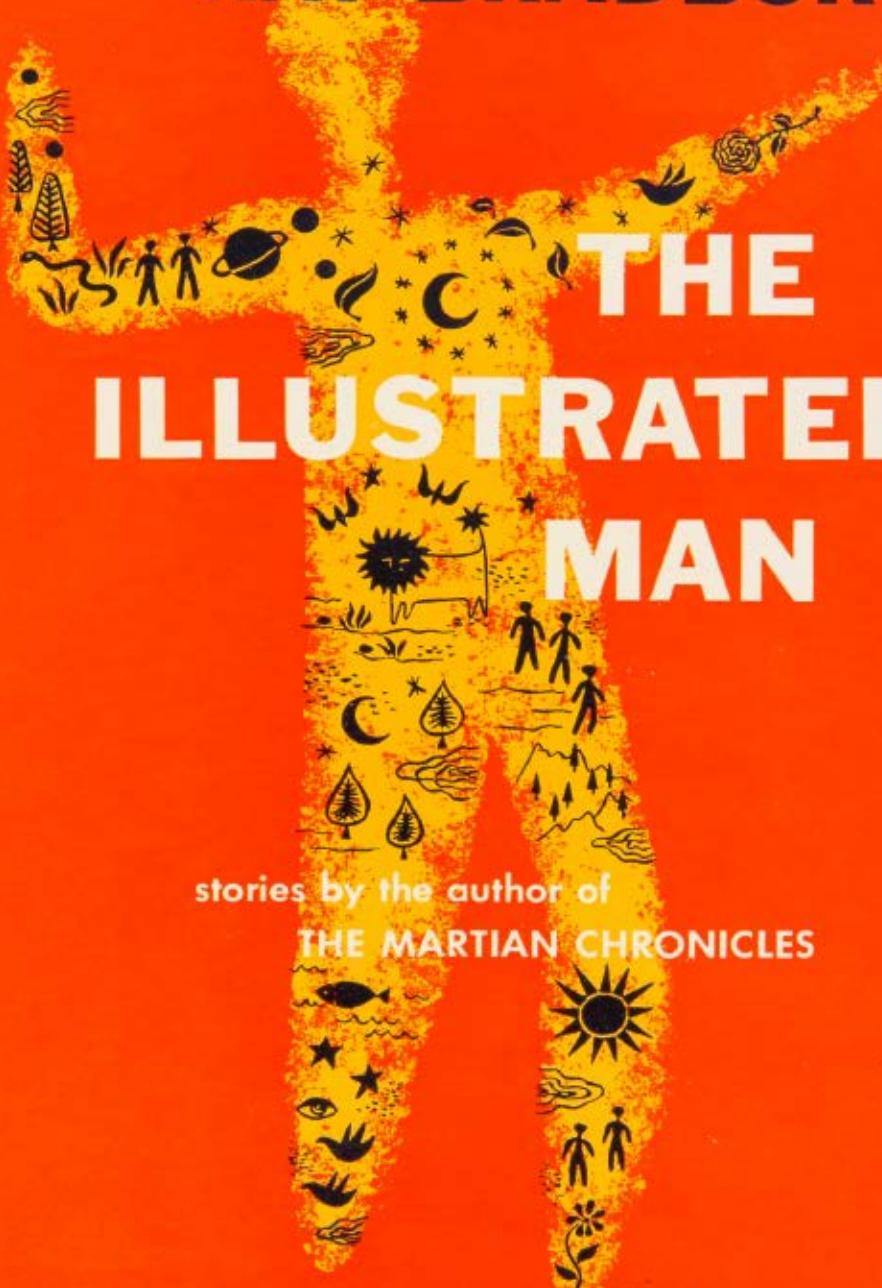
Bellow, Saul

The Victim
(NY, 1947).

1st edition of the Nobel laureate's 2nd novel. Fine in a dustjacket with 2 corners bumped, a 1/8" edge tear, the white letters just off white, but assuredly near fine, pretty and gratifying, with the blue spine unfaded and still blue, and lesser copies are only worth buying if you own a table, with a leg that's an inch too short. **400**

Bellow was an American born in Canada, that place that exists to protect the U.S. from ice. *The Victim* is a novel of anxiety, with guilt and introspection playing the minor roles, and the major role assigned to the question, how does one fend off nihilism and define oneself with dignity in a world that makes so many demands?

RAY BRADBURY



**THE
ILLUSTRATED
MAN**

stories by the author of
THE MARTIAN CHRONICLES

Butcher

ink

Bradbury, Ray

The Illustrated Man
(Garden City, 1951).

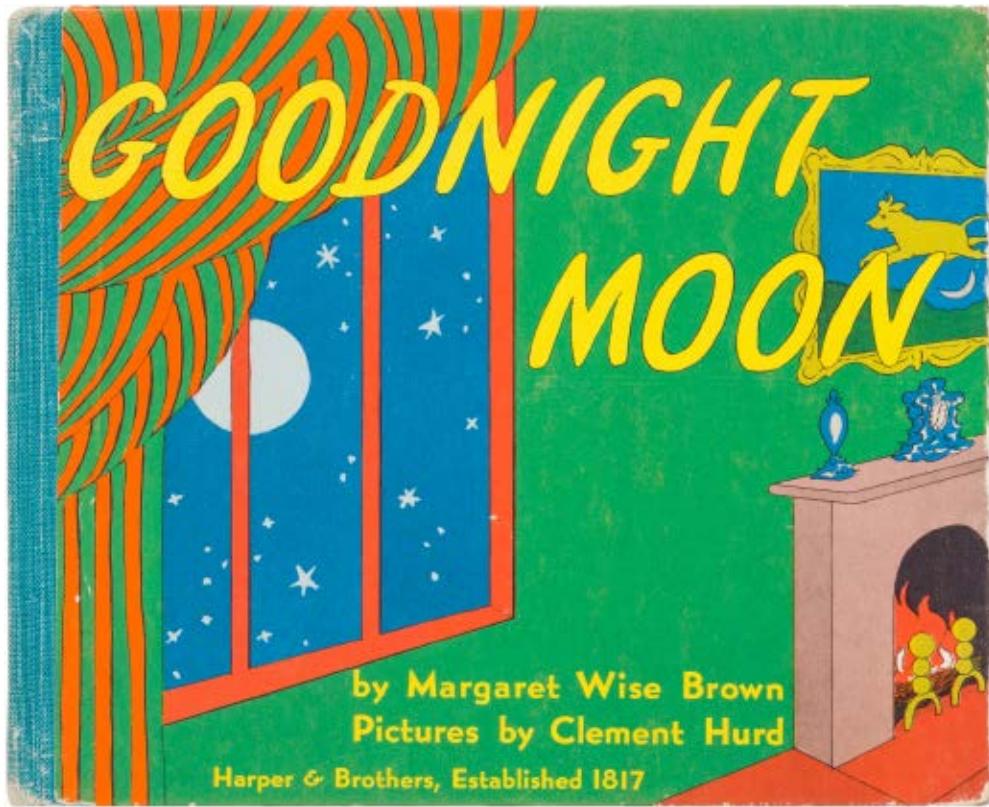
1st edition. A contemporary, signed presentation copy, inscribed in blue ballpoint pen, "For Edward Michel with my best wishes and good luck—from Ray Bradbury March 2, 1951" (far better and scarcer than a copy signed later with his usual felt-tip). Fine in a fine dustjacket despite minute rubs at the tips, with no fading, even to the spine, and spine fading is the typical first sign of decline on this jacket, and (equally important) our book and jacket are exemplary ones in every other way too, all you could want in a 1st edition of this title. 18 stories, a prologue and an epilogue, united by the device of a man, who was tattooed by a time-traveler (or maybe she was an alien, or maybe a witch), and whose "illustrations" come alive, each one telling a different story set in, and revealing a glimpse of, the future. The diversity is dazzling, from the first one, The Veldt (a futuristic, virtual reality nursery, inadvertently turned by the children who play in it, into a device for killing their parents), to the last one, The Rocket (a response to the space travel dreams of a junk man, who rebuilds a scrap rocket into an amusement park space ride so as to convince his children that they have realized his dreams, and flown to the moon and to Mars). The stories are deftly crafted, and uncover tiers of emotion, an important quality breakthrough for science fiction. 2,500

The scrolls of book collecting acknowledge that some things change, and some things stay the same, but as to guidelines for what kind of 1st editions to buy, either I've been missing something, or nothing has been going on, because these 2 rules have long held constant, and are still a touchstone for any collector.

Rule 1: Strive to understand (dissect and scrutinize) the varying parameters of condition for each individual 1st edition you might buy, how it was manufactured and distributed, and what was most likely to impact it as it survived (was handled and mis-handled) in a library, and therefore, how it is most inclined to first decay. Then strive to buy the finest copy possible (exercising patience) that is unaffected by those very inclinations (like fading of the dustjacket spine on The Illustrated Man), as well as the conventional faults that impact all books, and then only buy that 1st edition in its earliest state, either an advance copy, or exactly duplicating the book as it was for sale in a retail bookstore on publication day (Book Code).

Rule 2: Never forget Rule 1, and ignore all suggestions that there is a Rule 3.

The end of an entry for a science-fiction 1st edition, seems as reasonable a place as any to unambiguously convey, and thereby defend, a Biblioctopus principle that might be cursorily decried as xenophobic. Though, in theory, we will sell our books to anybody with the money in hand to meet our asking price, the reality is that we refuse to accept any orders from any hypothetical sentient consciousness, occupying any alternate or analogous mode, or as it's called parallel universe, or multi-verse, that vibrates on any hyper-dimensional plane different from the 3 spatial dimensions observable in our own native cosmos.

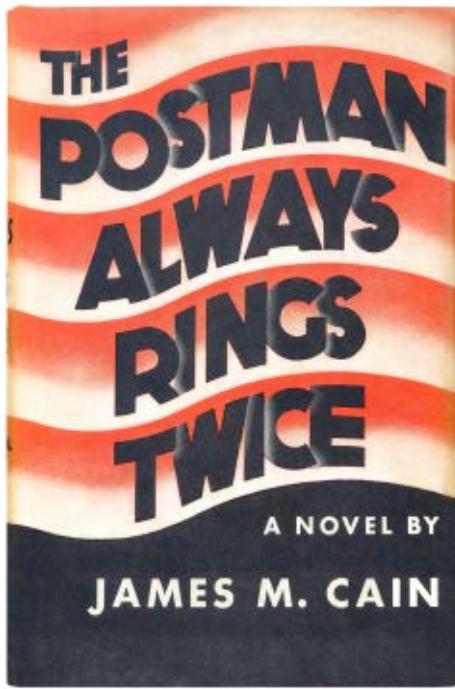


Brown, Margaret Wise

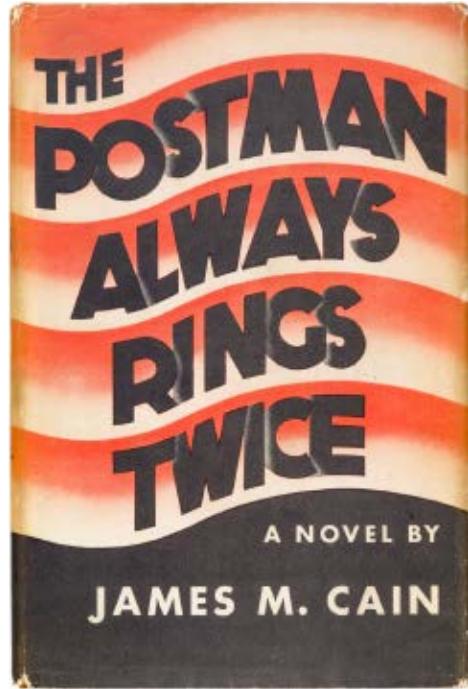
Goodnight Moon
(NY [Harper & Brothers], 1947).

1st edition of a hugely famous book. Clothbacked pictorial boards, no dustjacket, and that's the snag. This copy conforms to the 1st edition as far as it goes, meaning that the only way I know to conclusively identify the 1st printing is by the dustjacket. Very good, spine tips and edges rubbed, corners worn. "In the great green room..." 500

Some books come by the adjective classic, like some insects come by the name centipede, not because they have 100 legs but because some people can't count past 20. I won't make you cringe with any best book in the whole wide world stuff, but before it was an anchor in every child's bedroom, it sold slower than postal chess. In fact, it took Harper 7 years to retail the first 10,000 copies. It's awfully simple, 130 words and 20 Clement Hurd pictures. Trivialities uncover another layer, call it deeper, or call it furtive, though there are not enough mysterious underlying secrets to mold a religion, or even a conspiracy theory. Here're only a few of them: The mouse runs around, often very close to the cats but they never move on it. The clocks show it took the "old lady" an hour and 10 minutes to read baby bunny this 5-minute book. There is a wandering mailbox in the corner of the cow picture, or is there? Well, sometimes it's there, sometimes it's not. Oh, and just to tidy up this description (and at the end bring it back around to the beginning), on the nightstand is a copy of Goodnight Moon, but you can't see the price on the jacket.



Cain, James



The Postman Always Rings Twice
(NY, 1934).

1st edition of his first novel. Setting Cain chronologically, what we're trying to get is a seal here (Hammett) and a seal here (Chandler) and run this play in the alley. Fine in fine dustjacket, perfect save for slight tanning of the white on the spine. 20 times rarer than a very good one for 3 times the price (your safe word is "math"). The greatest books from 1920 to 1960, in fine dustjackets, are hard to find at any price, while their very good counterparts back up in bookseller's inventory like bad plumbing, foretelling a coming readjustment of price spreads between very good and fine copies, that more accurately reflects their respective availability. **10,500**

Cain, James

The Postman Always Rings Twice
(NY, 1934).

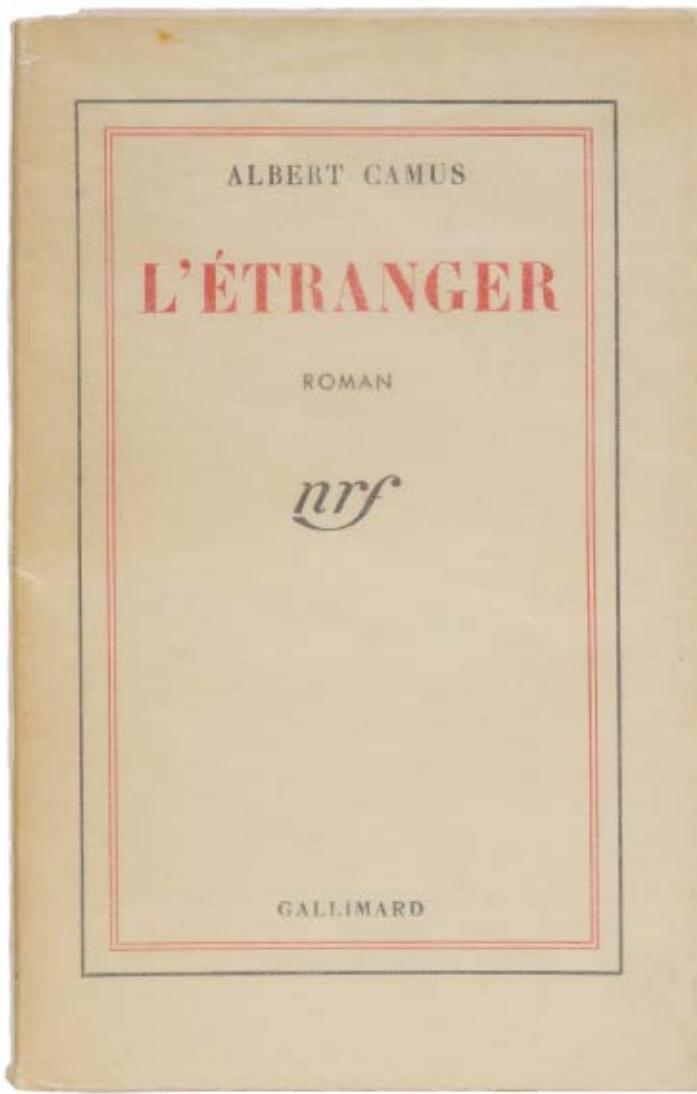
1st edition. Near fine in a very good dustjacket (2 short scratches, and some wear but no major damage) and cheaper ones are going to be from the dead zone, and carry at least 1 creepy flaw, or be repaired, or be in the skeleton of a jacket. **3,500**

If you're looking for the postman in this novel, then you haven't got a clue, and couldn't get a clue, during clue mating season, with a pocketful of clue-bucks, if you soaked yourself in clue perfume, and did the clue-mating dance at cluepalooza. The title is Cain's feint, an unexplained and undefended misdirection for his own unrevealed purpose, a short cut towards some quirky hidden aim. Much in the same way that hijacking a bulldozer to liberate all the monkeys in the zoo may be unexplainable and indefensible, but if your hidden aim is (for just one example) to stage an all monkey fashion show, then you're going to have to cut some corners.

Camus, Albert

L'Etranger
[The Stranger, or The Outsider]
(Paris, 1942).

1st edition (in French), 1st printing. Fine in wrappers and near fine tissue jacket (photographed in the jacket), scarce in any condition, and rare like this, because it's



1 of the comparatively few review copies (SP), and thus clean throughout, as opposed to copies of the regular trade issue (except review copies) which were printed on cheap wartime paper that habitually turns brown and brittle. 15,000

Camus won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1957 largely for his own take on the philosophie de l'absurde (when you sit down, you sit on your own ass, and no one can sit on it for you), exemplified in this novel and his next one, *Le Peste* (*The Plague*) in 1947.

L'Etranger surrounds an existential anti-hero living a familiar, listless, and ordinary life. He has accidentally come by, or has unconsciously developed, an advanced ability to be detached, and therefore to remain

impartial. Inexplicably (unless I'm missing something, et je le fais souvent), he commits a murder, is caught, and condemned, and his passage occupies the reader (in a participatory sense) with this neutrality and a numbing demonstration of his non-identification throughout the process.

I wrote you that abstract in safety, instead of trying to deconstruct *L'Etranger*, because I had always assumed cliché was a suburb of Paris until I discovered it to be a personality of those who critique existentialist's novels, but I'll say this. It may be that existence is a pointless joke, but one cannot live one's life as if this were so.

half revealed is half concealed

Chandler, Raymond

Farewell My Lovely
(NY, 1940).

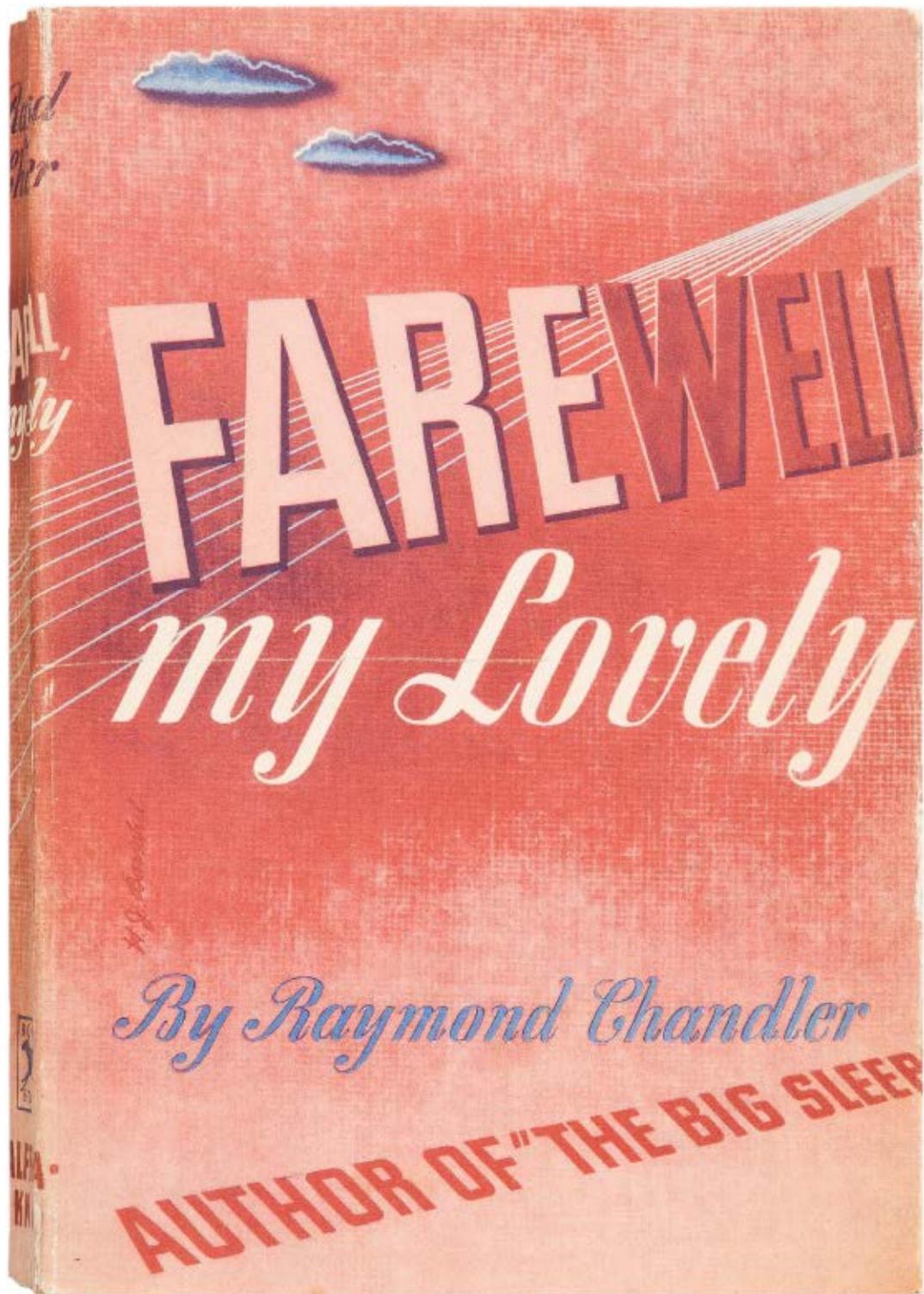
Advance issue of the 1st edition. Original wrappers (bound into the dustjacket as published). 1 scratch to the front cover, else a fine copy with no fading, even to the spine. Laid-in is the publisher's review slip, and their stamp is on the top page edges (as issued). This perishable state (probably 5% of the 7,500 copy 1st printing) precedes the hardbound issue. It's not a rare book but it is a difficult one to find in this flashy condition. And because scarred copies are always available, desperate sellers try to portray them favorably by conjuring up a flattering physical description, that wickedly employs dismissal and subterfuge in a dervish dance of shifty lingo, reminiscent of the Cirque du Soleil contortionist. **6,500**

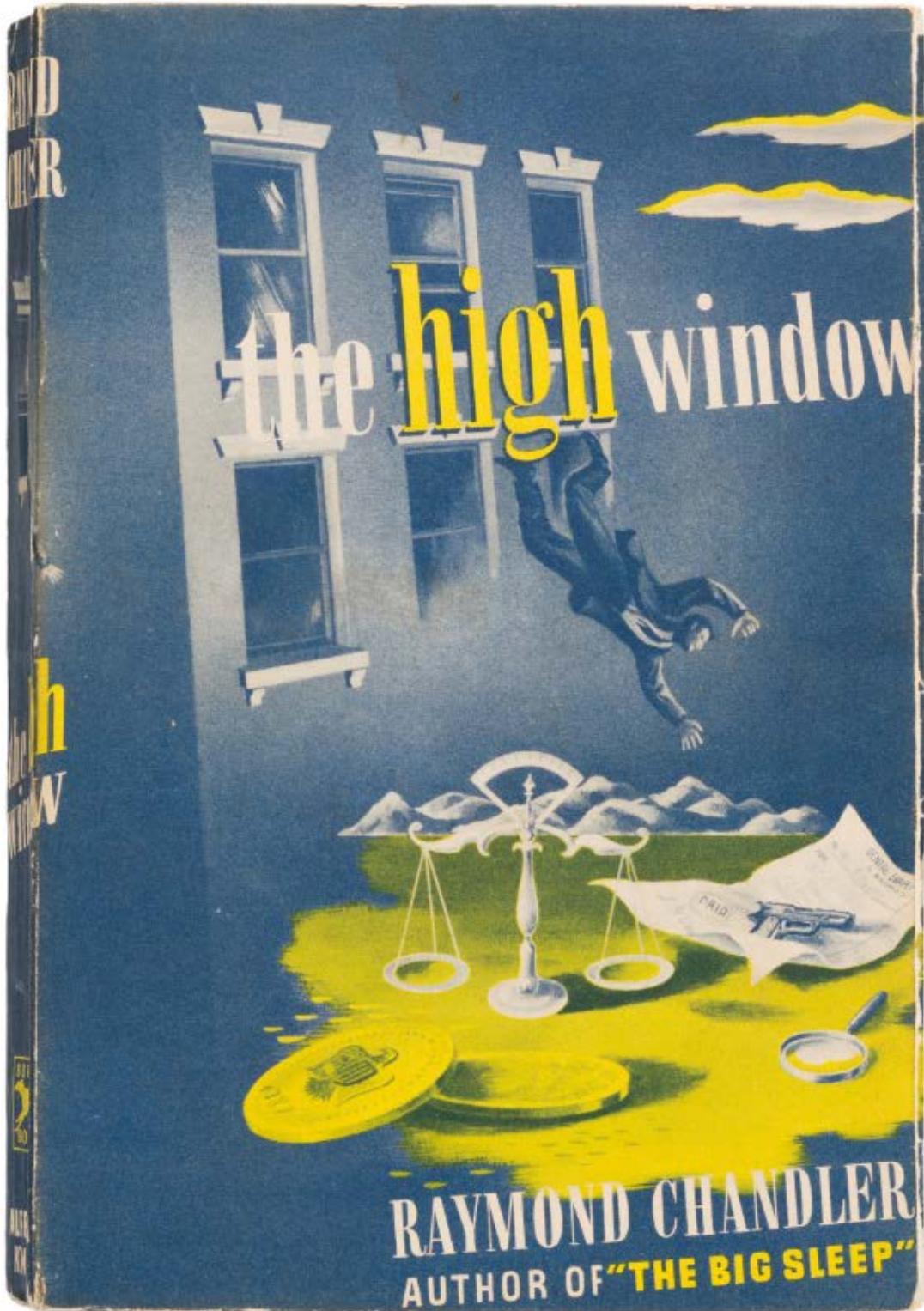
Chandler (July 23, 1888–March 26, 1959) was born in Chicago but raised and educated in France, England and Germany. In his 20s he was a journalist (take a word and create a narrative), then served with the Canadian forces during WWI. After the war he returned to the U. S. and worked as an officer in a string of oil companies. He lost his job in 1932 (a victim of the depression), eyed crime from both sides, decided against it, and then in 1933, began moonlighting as a writer of mysteries for the pulps, first finding acclaim in Black Mask Magazine with the short story, *Blackmailers Don't Shoot*. More stories and steady success ensued, culminating in 1939 with his first novel, *The Big Sleep*, followed by 6 more novels over 19 years. In them he reinvented the hardboiled style, with singular characters, sarcastic metaphors, moral ambiguity, derisive descriptions, rapier sharp dialogue, and misdirection driven plot lines, none of it ever strained, and though imitated by infinite wannabes, he's yet to be surpassed. In the 1940s, Hollywood snuck up on Chandler like a bug sneaks up on a windshield. Totally ready for studio cash, he rewrote the scripts of others, and helped translate his own books into film, but his genius was more comfortable in isolation, so it is the 7 novels that remain his legacy, and along the way, he painted the most witty, gritty, broadly famous, and still undying picture of mid-century Los Angeles, in those pastoral days before Southern California took itself seriously.

"The bell didn't work so I rapped on the wooden margin of the screen door. Slow steps shuffled and the door opened and I was looking into dimness at a blowsy woman who was blowing her nose as she opened [it]. Her face was gray and puffy. She had weedy hair of that vague color which is neither brown nor blond, that hasn't enough life in it to be ginger, and isn't clean enough to be gray. Her body was thick in a shapeless outing flannel bathrobe many moons past color and design. It was just something around her body. Her toes were large and obvious in a pair of man's slippers of scuffed brown leather.

I said: 'Mrs. Florian? Mrs. Jessie Florian?'

'Uh-huh.' The voice dragged itself out of her throat like a sick man getting out of bed." –page 24





delegate of the ethical

Chandler, Raymond

The High Window
(NY, 1943).

Advance issue of the 1st edition. Original wrappers (bound into the dustjacket as published). Minor specks of use here and there but fine condition (no chips, tears, repair, soiling or fading), blue as a bruise, fresher than NASCAR road-kill, and copies in this easily wounded binding state (probably 5% of the 6,500 copy 1st printing) are rarer in fine condition than things that get better by talking about them. Publisher's stamp on the top edge, "Sample Copy Not For Sale." 7,500

Chandler has managed an additional level of fame, first because unsophisticated readers, with their literal minds, were baffled by his irony, and sought explanations that only intensified the joke, and second because those writers who did not have his acute powers of accurate observation, simplistically scorned them as cynicism. So he remains unequaled by his counterfeiters (those literary equivalents of Judy Garland impersonators) who regarded how he wrote as easy to exceed, if one just wrote grumpy dialogue and inner monologues, and then, of course, they did so inadequately (when they came to shoe the horse, the beetle stretched out his leg).

High Window is his 3rd novel of 7, and apart from Playback (unfairly disparaged), and no matter how anybody ranks them, you can throw a pinned-up tail at the donkey poster comprised of the other 6, and wherever it lands, you have pricked a great book. This one opens with a woman who's face is her pepper spray, and then is progressively packed with town folk who display all the allure of cracked plaster, and overanxious criminals who track their prey with the dedication of Elmer Fudd (shake car keys over their grave and they would rise from the dead to steal a ride). But Chandler manages to tattoo a soap bubble, and elegantly move them all through a convoluted plotline with no more uproar than a jellyfish. The themes remind the reader that vanity speaks to honor while conscience speaks to justice, that violence is not the problem, it is a consequence of the problem, and that there are 2 types of skepticism, the kind that prods you to incite sincerity, and the kind that is just built into poor quality people, prematurely disenchanted with the future. And there's something heavier here too, something arcane. The profound idea that the detective novel is not about murder, it is about restoring order.

If you look carefully, some chance copies, of these advance issues, of Chandler's early novels (the first 4) in wrappers and dustjacket, are going to be out there, but they will all bear the wear of previous mishaps, or be encrusted with alluvial deposits, and then disappointingly burdened with weak excuses for their condition, borne out by a careful reading of the descriptions attached to copies called fine, which are filled with more buried lies than MPG ads. Any as fine as this one have always been rare, and that is the trial of patience now demanded of those who would collect Raymond Chandler, since you can always find multiple copies of his 1st editions for sale, you just can't find any that are in unassailably fine condition.

With love from
Agatha Christie

"murder" she wrote

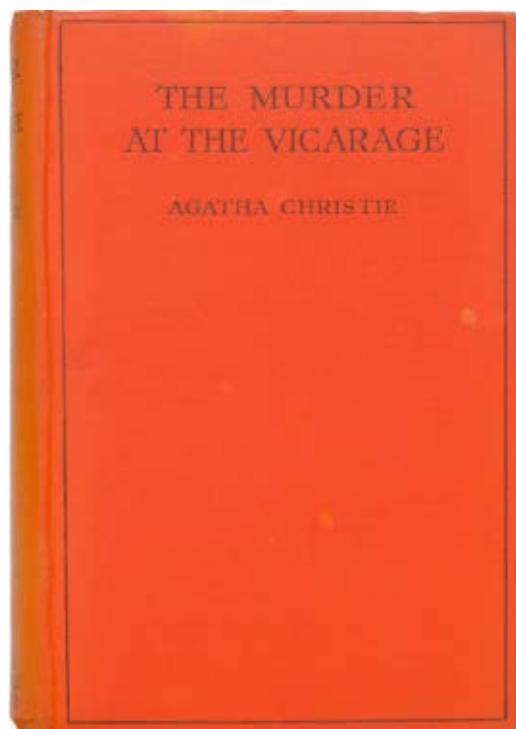
Christie, Agatha

Murder at the Vicarage
(London, 1930).

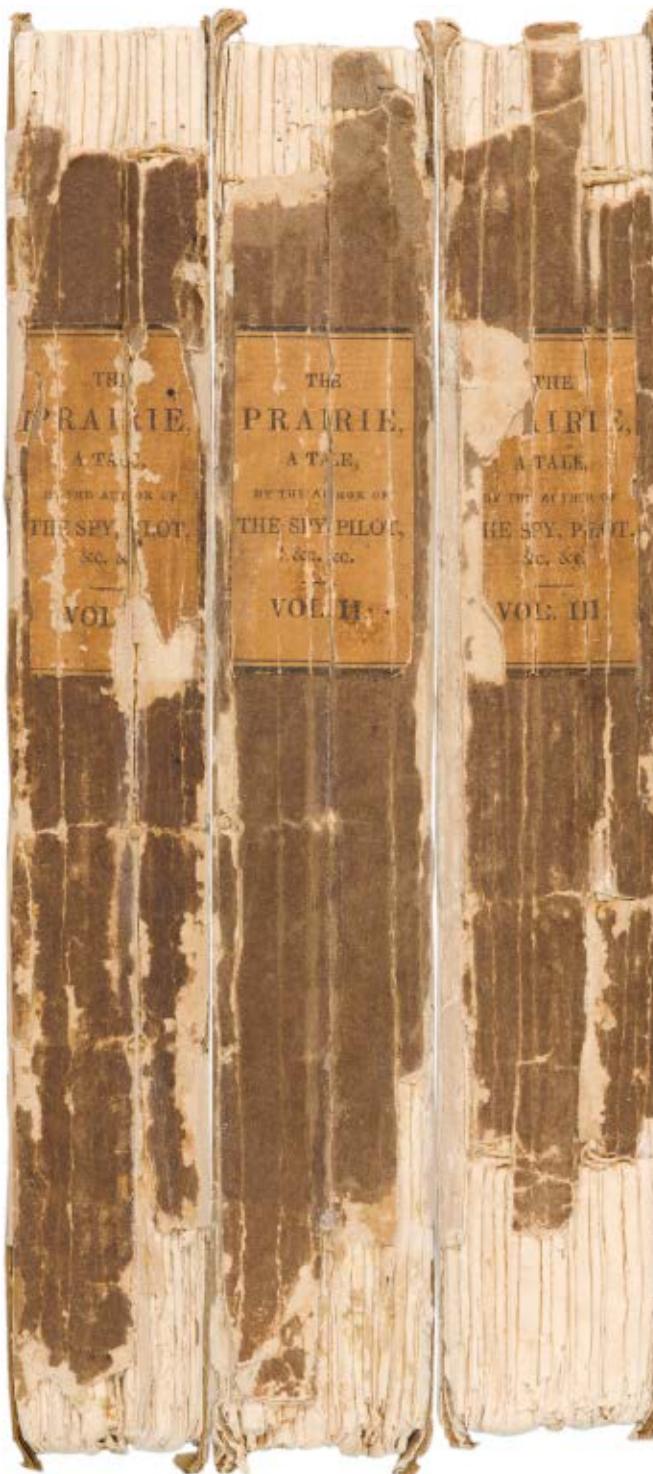
1st edition of a landmark debut, the first Miss. Marple novel. Inscribed, "With love from Agatha Christie" and though the recipient is unidentified, it was surely someone close to her, as it's unusual to see her books inscribed "with love." Cloth, light spots, spine faded, near fine, superior for this book, and most copies look like a well chewed pen top, but alas, no dustjacket.

7,000

Christie perfects the amateur sleuth and the woman as detective, dedicates the book to her 11 year old daughter, and sets up all the woman authors of the next generation to write about policewomen, private eyes, spies, and recreational investigators. And it was Agatha Christie and Miss. Marple, who shaped the most successful mystery series in the history of television, as Jessica Fletcher was a barely masked Agatha Christie and the title of the series (Murder She Wrote) was taken from Murder, She Said, the title of a film adaption of a Miss. Marple novel, 4:50 From Paddington.



"Agatha Christie has given more pleasure in bed than any other woman."
—Nancy Banks-Smith



rare in boards

Cooper, James

The Prairie
(London, 1827).

3 vols. 1st edition, preceding the later Paris (1st Continental) edition, and the still

later Philadelphia (1st American) edition. The 3rd novel published in Cooper's Leatherstocking series, following *The Pioneers* (1823) and *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826), and preceding *The Deerslayer* (1840) and *The Pathfinder* (1841), though *The Prairie* is the last of the 5 chronologically (set in 1804). Brown boards, paper spines, and labels, uncut, 2 of the 6 boards renewed with an esthetic eye, matching the others though thinner, so without aiming at deception. Bindings worn, spines well chipped, joints strengthened, but not rebacked, else a very good set. If you are enamored with bibliography, this will test your focus: Our set is complete, with half-titles in vols. I and II as called for, and no half-title in vol. III, as issued, conforming to B. A. L.'s (*The Bibliography of American Literature*) conjecture at a collation "<i–iv>?" for the prelims in vol. III. Reference: B. A. L. 3834, saying, "Probably issued in boards, cloth back (sic), paper label" meaning B. A. L. never saw a set in the original binding, and he gives the sheet size as 7" X 4 1/8" while our set measures 7 5/16" X 4 5/16" so he never saw an untrimmed one either. His guess of boards and labels is here proven correct, but our set's spines are also paper, not cloth as he speculated. What can be deduced with confidence from his failure to locate, is that this is a rare book in the publisher's binding, so, despite its faults, our copy is a distinctive one, confirmed by 4 decades of ABPC's auction records, which list only 1 other 1st edition in boards and labels, and that was 27 years ago. You look at our photo, laugh, and think our set's in poor condition? Beep. Wrong. Thank you for playing. Its condition is humble only in isolation, and unmatchable by comparison. It transcends all the rebound sets which are always available and often praised, but their relative prominence is due to the flatness of the surrounding landscape, now altered by the availability of this peak of a copy. **2,000**

47 years after *The Last of the Mohicans* (in Leatherstocking time), *The Prairie* reintroduces Hawkeye, drifted with purpose to the uncharted territory, which became Wyoming and the Dakotas. The novel's theme is contrasts. The thin, superficial characters are mostly the whites, whereas the complex extremes are the Indians. [A declaration about words like "Indians." Politeness is humane, but the insufferably stiff and picky level of political correctness, that in the camouflage of espousing diversity is actually coercing conformity, dies in these catalogs where women will never be called "estrogen–Americans"]. So, the Pawnee are vibrant and noble, while the Tetons are cruel and sinister, thus the Indians play both sides of the drama circling the settlers' expansion into the land of the Louisiana Purchase. Hawkeye (unnamed throughout the novel) has fled American gentility, and the sound of axes civilizing his beloved Eastern forests. Now in his 80s, he has outgrown his illusions, and isolated himself in the land of the Pawnee, the Sioux, and the herds of buffalo. And though there is no respite from the unremittingly encroaching settlers, a great man cares about a world he will not see, so he expends the last of his strength and skills defending a group of outcast Kentuckians who are seeking land rights as far as possible from the law. Culminating in a grandly written death scene, *The Prairie* brings the old hunter full circle, with images of, and references to, his youth, along with reminiscences of the remarkable life, which made him the original, and the prototype, American hero.

Crumb, Robert

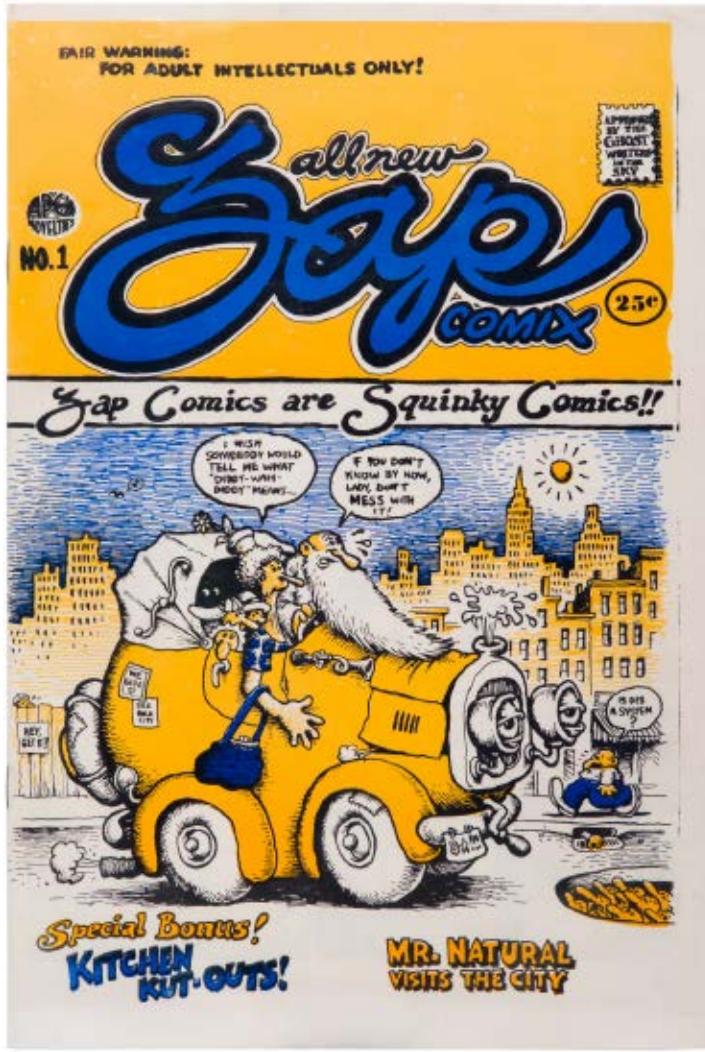
Zap Comix Number 1

(San Francisco, 1967, actually Feb. 1968).

1st edition, 1st printing (25 cents, etc.). All stories, all interior art, the cover drawing and its coloring by R. Crumb. A fine, pure copy without any flaws, fading, marks, creases, or repair. Slabbed and graded by CGC, as very fine "VF 8.0" (this is a drag to say, but do not buy ungraded comics because they cannot be resold, and your view of a comic means nothing to a future buyer, and CGC may downgrade a comic for a blemish you didn't notice, or pardoned as a trifle). 3,500 copies were printed on the press of Charles Plymell, and few were set aside as potential artifacts. Fogel's Underground Comix Price Guide put \$6,800 on this grade in 2010, but there are no birds in last year's nest, and progressively rising world records have been set at auction for the last 3 1/2 years. 8,500

Seeking perspective, I'll note that every generation strives to be a secret society, keeping its tastes, indulgences, enthusiasms, interests, and biases, an incomunicable mystery to both its predecessors and to posterity, and because every new adjustment creates its own corresponding crisis

in self-esteem, rapid change is easier for the young who possess the least fixed and thus most flexible self-esteem, and so are not apprehensive about adapting. Underground comix were shocking, groundbreaking, influential, unanticipated, obstinate, and, as irrevocable as a haircut, for independent comic publishers, and for people like me, the 20-somethings of 1968, who casually sought philosophical terrain, but not at the expense of amusement. 45 years later, I now embrace with tranquility, having been excommunicated from both the right and the left.



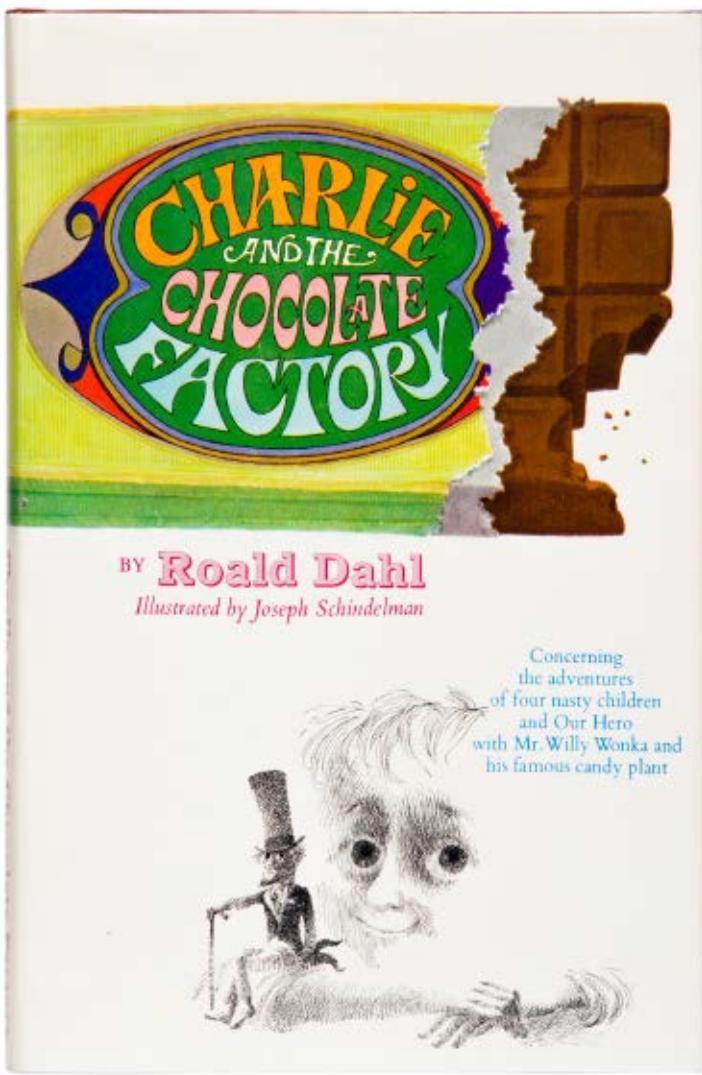
Willy Wonka

Dahl, Roald

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory
(NY, 1964).

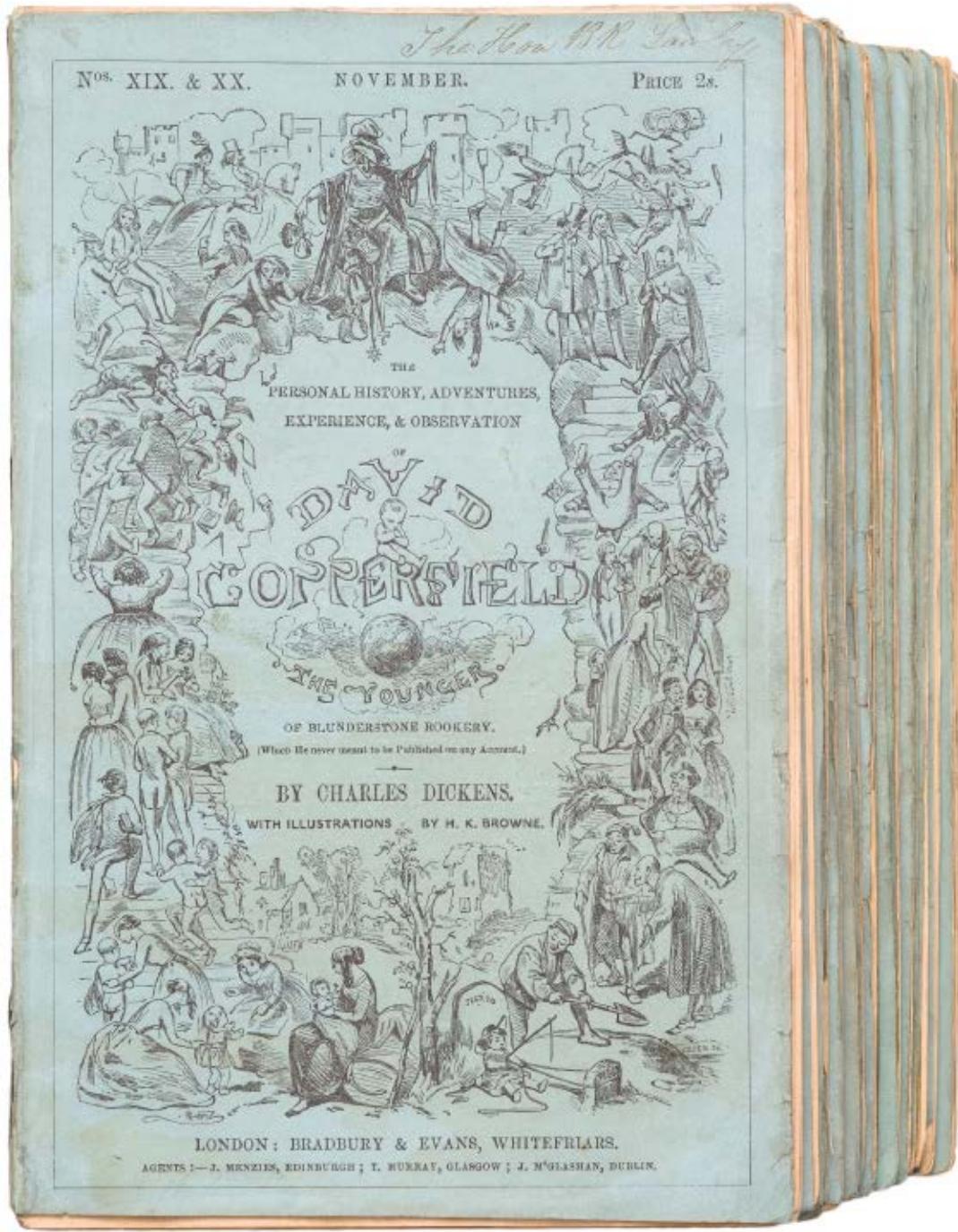
1st edition. Fine in fine dustjacket, with no hedges or qualifiers, precisely what all postmodern* 1st editions should be. 1st issue with each of the necessary points

for both the book and the jacket (and also boasting all of the unnecessary points, still dispensed with the arbitrariness of Mardi-Gras beads, and the gravitas of authority, but lacking the charm of the former and the substance of the latter). **8,000**



available in fine condition. And if I strayed, I was reminded when I tried to resell them, that buying mediocre copies of such books was riskier than handing my wallet to a goat. And since they are still available in fine condition, remember this: Judge the friends you would make (or keep) with sympathy, but judge the books you would buy with a godlike and imperious impartiality (Book Code. Own it).

* Throughout this catalog "modern" is defined as books published from 1901–1945, and "postmodern" is defined as published after World War II, no more, no less.



an entire set with all ads

Dickens, Charles

The Personal History of David Copperfield
(London, May 1849–Nov. 1850).

20 vols. in 19, a serialization sequentially published over 1 1/2 years. 1st edition, 1st issue, in the original monthly parts, preceding the clothbound edition and all

others, and read the next sentence deliberately, because the distressing phrase you inevitably see is “almost every” while the happy phrase you are about to see is “each and every.” This set conforms to each and every point in Hatton & Cleaver (all erratum, the correct covers, all ads, all samples, and all 40 inserted plates by H. K. Browne, including the frontispiece and vignette title). And perfection is important in a Dickens parts serialization because later ads are the telltale sign of later issue, in many cases months later, so do not discount comprehensiveness as mere frill, or turn your back on it the way you would on a drunk woman, haphazardly seated nearby at a dinner party, who relentlessly keeps insisting that you name your favorite Powerpuff Girl. Original wrappers, neat repairs to backstrips light wear at edges, else a very good set (the old-fashioned very good), infrequently offered for sale so clean, complete, upright and intact, a stirring combination of quality, magnitude, precedence, and inclusiveness. **Blue** morocco. case. Collation: Octavo (8 1/8" X 5 9/16"). [i-vii] viii [ix] x-xii [xiii] xiv [xv-xvi], [1], 2-624. Reference: Hatton and Cleaver, pp. 253-272. Eckel, pp. 75-77. **20,000**

Raising his game, at the height of his powers, Dickens explores writing in the first person and achieves the great novel of initiation, finding the ideal balance between the bustling energy of his early works and the mature sense of design exhibited here for the first time. The plotline is pierced by an unsettling exposé of the treatment inflicted on Victorian children, and this is buttressed by poignant statements about the terrors and torments of youth coming of age, most of which apply in any era, and successfully concluding his quest, the novel ends with a glimpse of the grown man. Dickens began to write it as pure autobiography, but he found the naked facts too personal, accordingly, many of the events are drawn from his personal experiences, but many more are fictionalized from his keen reconnaissance of life. However, Micawber can be no other than Dickens' father, and there is no doubt that David Copperfield is Dickens himself. And knowing that he had laid the needle against the **redline** pin on the great-ometer, he openly stated, more than once, that Copperfield was his favorite from among all his books.

I have no advice for (or endurance for) those fussy collectors who are fussy in the sense that the books they are currently not buying must be perfect (imagining that the bluster of their requirements somehow dupe the bookseller into believing that they themselves are as perfect as the standards they are setting for the books they would not buy in any case). But I do have some time-focused advice for you active-aggressive collectors who are actually hopeful of completing a transaction. If you want to work your collection's peripheries, shaping the whole as well as the parts, and always keep busy doing something, then on a yearly basis, purge your library. That means scrape off the bottom 10%, sell it, and use the money to add a great book or 2 at the top. And on a daily basis, buy and sell as if you have been reincarnated into a second lifetime, sent back for previous mishaps and tasked with avoiding your prior carelessness. As for me, I have an ongoing misunderstanding with nature over my library. I think it's an array of fine books worth protecting. She thinks it's the remnants of dead trees and tries her best to return them to mulch.

Athos, Porthos, Aramis, and d'Artagnan

Dumas, Alexandre

Vingt Ans Après

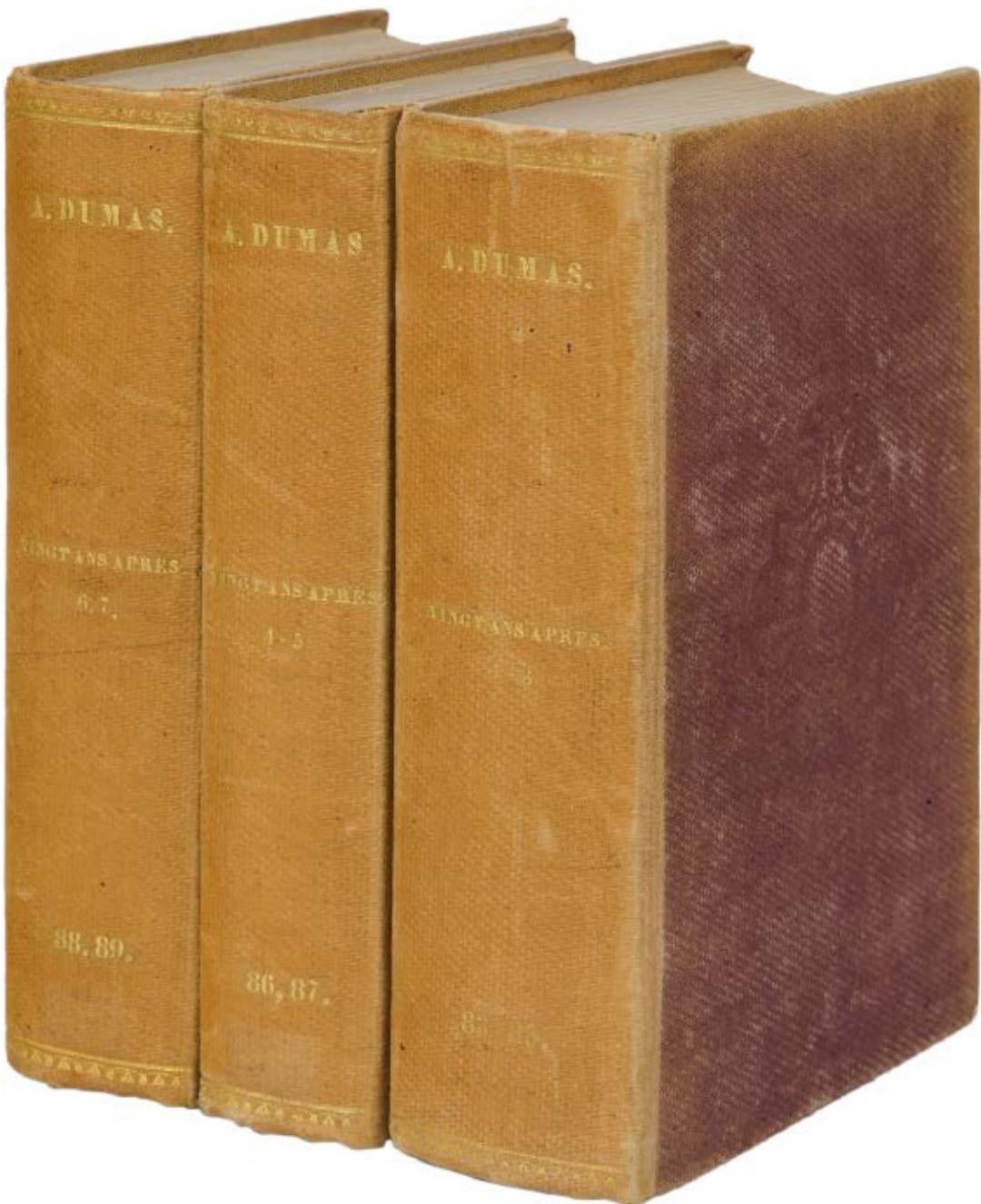
[Twenty Years After]

(Brussels [Société belge de librairie Hauman], 1845).

7 vols. in 3. 1st edition (in French), 1st issue (16mo. in 7 vols.). This 1st edition is the real deal, unquestionably preceding Baudry's Paris edition, and Hauman's own 2nd edition (18mo. in 10 vols.), the 3 other 1845 Brussels editions, and all the rest. Any arguments against its priority test logic. Munro clearly states that this edition, and this issue of it, is the 1st of all, and no one has cogently tendered any other sequence. 19th century purple cloth, spines faded to tan, very good, bound without half-titles but otherwise whole, with Romanesque Aventure de ma vie, par le Bibliophile Jacob, filling out the final 93 pages of vol. VII, as issued. Compelling, appealing, and scarce, and though this edition's priority over the Paris edition is sure, some collectors would pay 20 times our price for Baudry's edition and swear it is the only one bestowing pride of ownership, while others would insist that 1st is always best. And that's because each of us looks at any given book, and sees what we see, and what we see is not always the same. Like sometimes I look into the face of our dog (Lily the Kid) and see fatalistic sadness and wistful anguish, when all she is really doing is staring at the lamp waiting for a circling moth to run out of gas. 3,750

Twenty Years After is the first sequel to The Three Musketeers, set in the political upheaval of 1648–1649, and I'll maintain that it's the most historical of Dumas' historical romances. It opens during 2 civil wars, and only the charisma of the Musketeers could possibly hold up the fictional portion of the plotline, against the dizzying storms of such volatile historical events, coincident and parallel revolts against the absolute power of the crown, the parliamentary insurrection in France of the first Fronde (which mostly collapsed into the Peace of Rueil, and 3 years of fragmented, factional intrigues) and those in England of Cromwell's second Civil War (which culminated in the 1649 execution of King Charles I and the establishment of the Commonwealth). The historical action first divides, then occupies, then infects, engulfs, and finally reunites the Musketeers, now all grown up, savvy, constant, dynamic, and ready for the personal defiance demanded by the times.

The Fronde did fail (disparate aims and unfocused efforts), but the English Civil War was the first successful act in a fanatically manipulated, 280-year long, Western world sedition to topple all the European monarchies. And though Charles' successor (Charles II) survived in exile, and returned, in 1660, to regain the throne when Cromwell's Commonwealth collapsed (revisionists do get revised), he did so in a primitive Parliamentary monarchy, which slowly, but steadily, eroded the King's absolute power. And the philosophies lit the 1776 American Revolution, cycled back into Europe and triggered the 1789 French Revolution, 19th century democratic constitutions in Denmark and The Netherlands, Finland's universal suffrage in 1906, and finally culminated at the end of World War I, with the fall of the Russian Czar, the German Kaiser, and the Austrian Habsburgs.



Pub. date: Aug 1966
Price: \$3.95 (tent)

UNCORRECTED PROOF

Tarantula | Bob Dylan

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY, NEW YORK

310

the one, the real, the first

Dylan, Bob

Tarantula
(NY, 1966).

Uncorrected proof of the 1st edition. His first book. This proof is the only authorized printing of Tarantula in the 1960s, and the only genuine configuration of Tarantula that Macmillan produced before the 1971 1st edition. Near fine (only slight wear) in publisher's printed wrappers, 2 lines of tentative price and publication date (Aug. 1966) in holograph (ink) at the top, and "376" in red felt tip at the lower corner, which may be control numbers or (likelier) a 3 July, 1966 date (Dylan's motorcycle crash and injuries, halting production, were on July 29th). These fabled, spiral bound, preproduction (suppressed) galley proofs (11" tall) were never issued, sold, or given to anyone. They are the authentic article, rare by any measure (6–10 manufactured is a guess), and the reason they preceded Macmillan's 1971 book edition by 5 years, was that Dylan's interest waned in the aftermath of his accident. And obviously, these proofs preceded all the pirated editions, because it was a single stolen proof copy (not our copy) that was a model for the bootlegs.

10,000

Tarantula is an embodiment of the '60s that captures an essence of the times like no other book, and this proof of it is a wonderful survivor, of undisputed priority, singular stature, and paramount rarity. But everything written in the 60s wasn't Tarantula, so hear this: "Let me tell you about the 1960s..." is a 1-line introduction that should always draw the response, "Hold it right there."

Dylan, Bob

Tarantula
(NY, 1966).

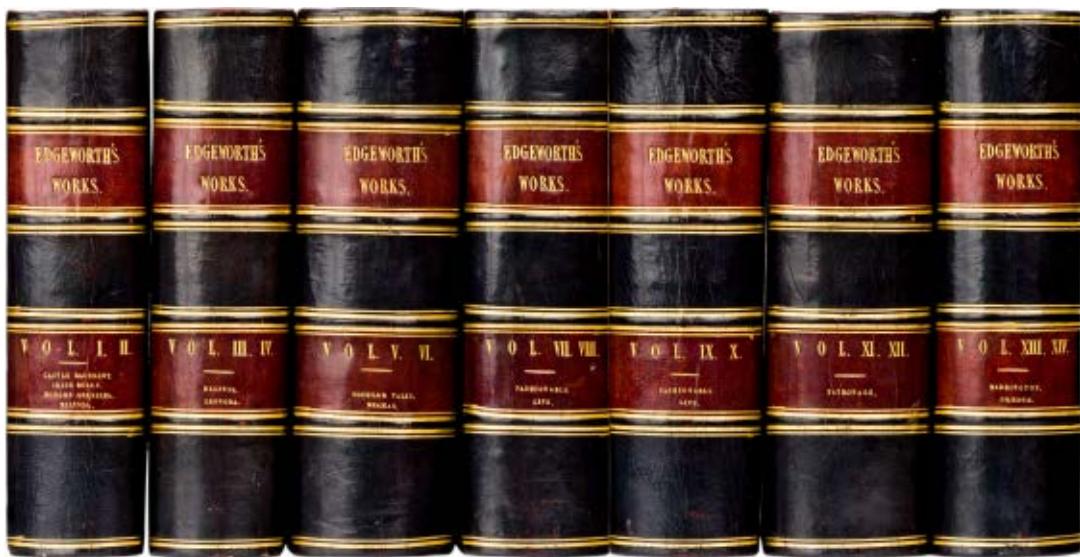
1st edition (produced and published by Weberman). 38 loose sheets, unstapled and unsewn in unillustrated folder, as published, a bootleg (pirated edition), preceding all



other printings intended for, or sold to, the public, and preceded in type only by Macmillan's pre-production galley proofs. This is the first (of many) underground (illicit) editions, and it's the only one copied directly from Macmillan's proofs. Near fine condition and

a complete copy with Weberman's Introduction, and the D. L. F. Buffalo Position Paper on yellow stock laid-in, all in a near fine, titled (by rubberstamp?) manila folder (light soiling and wear to the outside folder only). Technically, this is the 1st published edition, despite it not being authorized or lawful. And it isn't common when all the pieces are present, but comparing the Macmillan proof to this bootleg, is like comparing a celestial star to a rock & roll star.

750



Edgeworth, Maria

Tales and Miscellaneous Pieces
(London [R. Hunter et al], 1825).

14 vols. in 7. 1st edition of this set of her works, published during her life and edited under her supervision. 19th century half black calf, red labels, a few small cord nicks from when the books were once bundled, else near fine, and a hefty set, that's only pulling 1 G, but will register a 7.3 on the Richter scale if you drop it. Ex-Frederick Lovell Keans, his armorial bookplate in each volume. **1,250**

Maria Edgeworth (1768–1849) was an Irish proto-feminist, the favorite daughter of Richard Lovell Edgeworth, Lord of Edgeworthstown, an almost grand Irish estate. She was born in Oxfordshire, lived there until her mother died in 1773, and then settled in with her father and his new wife in Ireland, attending school in Darby. At 12 she transferred to a London school, but 2 years later, an eye infection nearly blinded her, so she returned to Edgeworthstown and became her father's assistant in the management of his estate. Lord Edgeworth was half-famous as an author and inventor, but Maria was much smarter. She published her first written works in 1795, and though melodramatic, they encouraged women to continually challenge the influence and power of men, principally their husbands, and to do so with wit and intelligence. She next tried realism, and wrote a system for teaching (Practical Education) that stressed her goal of creating independent thinkers who understood the consequences of their actions. Frustrated by her father's insistence on editing her work (like most unimaginative men, he laid an exaggerated emphasis on not changing his mind), she turned to the novel, wrote one in secret, kept it as personal as remorse (if you're going to revolt, conspire before you act), and in 1800 submitted her manuscript anonymously. The novel was Castle Rackrent, a pivot in the evolving historical romance, and since I'm always chained to the limitations of my catalog space, it will have to be the focus of this entry, even though I'm selling a set of all her works. While Walter Scott

is credited with inventing the historical novel (*Waverley*, 1814), such things do not happen in a void, and Maria Edgeworth had read all the couriers of coming change (Thomas Leland's *Longsword*, 1762, Clara Reeve's *The Champion of Virtue*, 1782, and Sophia Lee's *The Recess*, 1785). She instantly understood that something was happening in fiction, even if she was unable to, or was not interested in, systematically dissecting the form. So Castle Rackrent had all the ingredients of historical romance without the all-encompassing edifice. Its success was tremendous and other writers, sensing the opportunity, welcomed the new freedom. First, Elizabeth Hamilton turned it towards biography in *Memoirs of the Life of Agrippina* (1804), taking what facts were known about this noblest women in all of Roman antiquity, but following her into places that did not suit the dignity of history to record. Then, Lady Morgan's *The Wild Irish Girl* (1806) inched closer to the eventual model, Anna Maria Porter (*The Hungarian Brothers*, 1807) achieved it without defining it, and finally, her sister, Jane Porter erased all but one of the distinctions (#1 below) between the national novel and the historical novel with *The Scottish Chiefs* (1810). In 1814, Walter Scott (the great beneficiary) delivered *Waverley* (PMM 273) and set the enduring rules. Among them:

1. Historical figures play the subordinate roles, while fictional characters (or obscure historical personalities) are the heroes and heroines.
2. Time is compressed for dramatic effect.
3. The story is set against a factual background, radiating veracity and allowing the reader to relate it to the time and place in which it occurs.
4. The novel is not overstuffed with historical data, which would retard the imaginary narrative and history's under explained to add an air of realism.
5. The surrounding history should be known to the reader, so an idea of the resolution provides a magnet that draws him or her towards the end.
6. The plot is never allowed to lapse into the improbabilities of the Gothic.

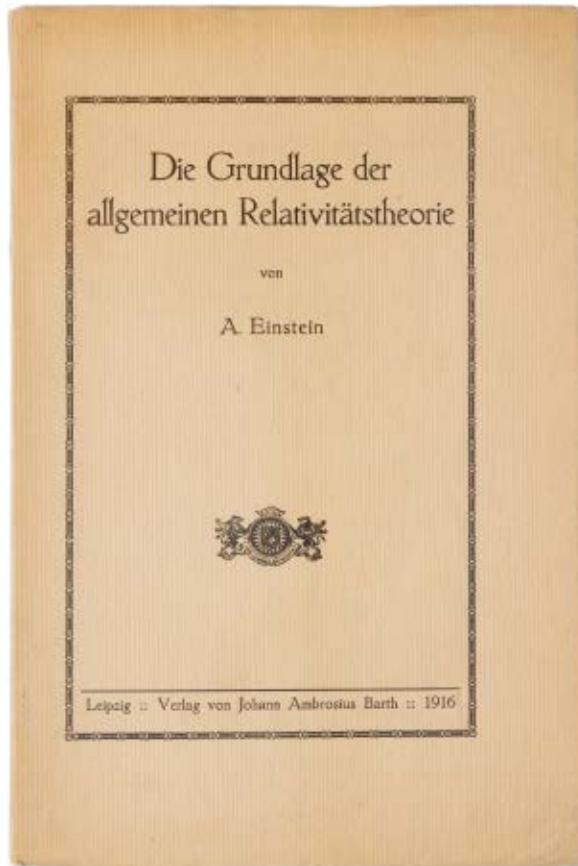
So, what of Castle Rackrent, and the flair Maria Edgeworth first displayed in it? From one or another perspective it can be defended as the first historical novel (I lean towards Leland's *Longsword*), or the first regional novel in English (seems to be so), the first Anglo-Irish novel (ok), the first Big House novel (yup), and the first saga novel (maybe). It's also regarded, in some scholastic circles, as the first novel to use the device of a narrator who is both unreliable and a witness of, rather than a player in, the actions chronicled (well yes, she's a first person narrator, but Fielding's narrative used plenty of misdirection in *Tom Jones*). Kirkpatrick says that she "both borrows from, and originates, a variety of literary genres and subgenres, without neatly fitting into any one of them" (indeed). And Yeats declared Castle Rackrent "one of the most inspired chronicles written in English" (Yeats playing it vanilla, as usual). I say, here is a lovely set of her works, edited under her own direction, promising an agreeable winter of reading.

$$e=mc^2$$

Einstein, Albert

Die Grundlage der Allgemeinen Relativitätstheorie
(Leipzig [Barth], 1916).

1st edition. Original wrappers, fine condition, and finer ones are as imaginary as the square root of minus 1, and though you can always buy flawed copies at our price, don't do it, certainly not as long as a copy like this one is for sale at no premium. Often (wrongly) called the "1st separate edition" because a portion of it appeared in the Annalen der Physik (also 1916), but lots of books have prior periodical appearances (and offprints too), without being designated "1st separate edition"



and there are many important additions and revisions here, that are not in the journal, including the first publication of the Introduction, announcing his peerlessly imperative theory of general relativity. The 1st edition is distinguished from the reprints by the printer's mark "Druck von Metzger & Wittig in Leipzig" on the verso of the title page, only 7 Barth titles (1909–1916) on the back, and with the shortened printer's imprint. Reference: Norman 696. Boni 78:1. Weil 80a. Printing and the Mind of Man 408. So here's this book, priced the same as Zap #1. Whatta world. **8,500**

Einstein's theory was tested and confirmed during a May, 1919 solar eclipse by 2 British astronomical expeditions, who reported to The Royal Academy

later that year. In 1922 Einstein won his Nobel Prize (the committee dallying for 3 years, because its scientists were not smart enough to verify the theory themselves, and fretted that someone might prove it incorrect, a lack of intellect mirrored today by Horace Engdahl, a hollow, feckless, and indefensibly vain buffoon with the teeniest penis in the Swedish Academy, including women).

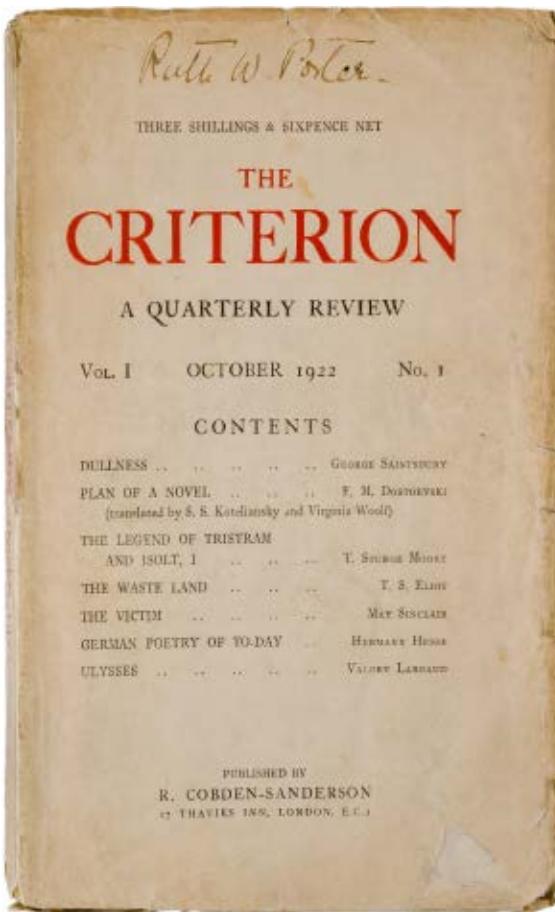
Ok. That's done. Now here's my theory of relativity for the 21st century: $e=w n^2$

e (the total energy sapped by inane conversation in BTUs) equals w (the weight of the Earth in grams) times n^2 (the number of letters in all the books ever printed, squared).

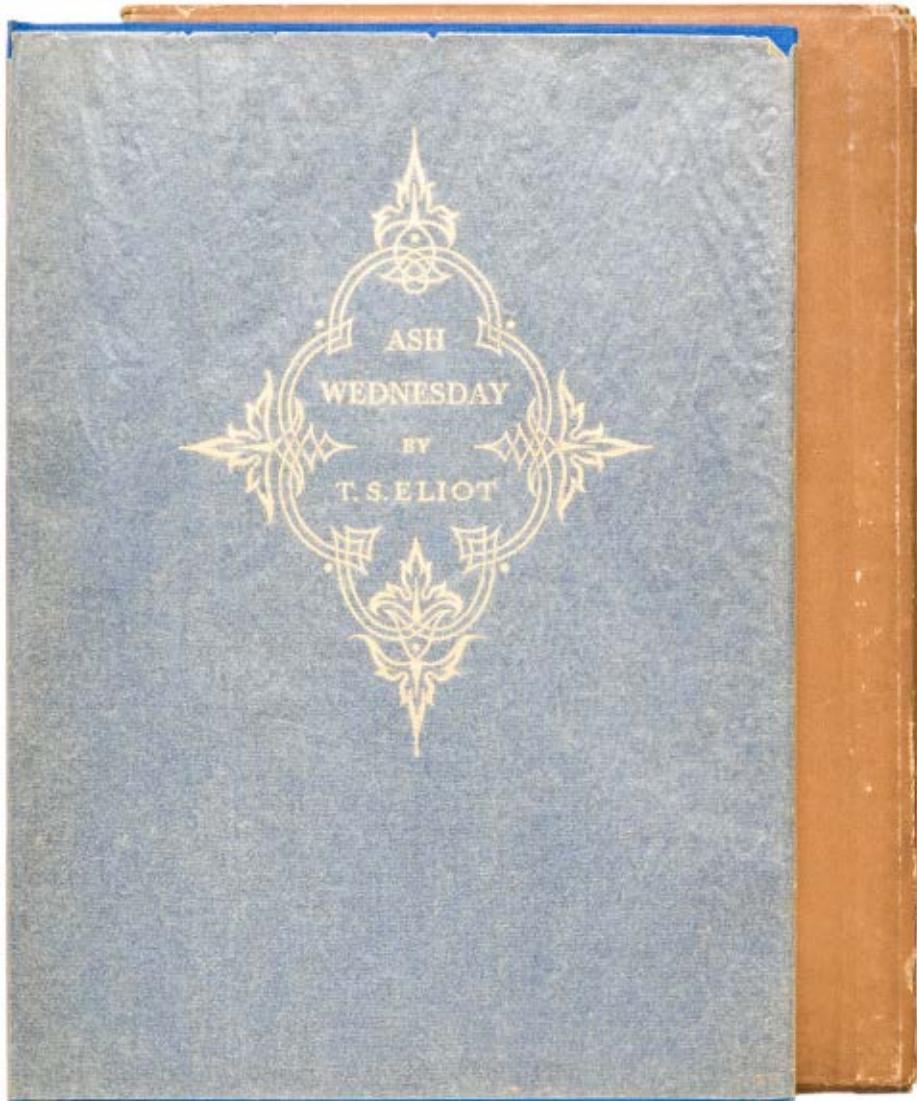
the 1st printing of all

Eliot, T. S. **The Waste Land**
 (London, Oct. 1922).

1st appearance anywhere, in any form, of the iconic modernist poem, preceding all others, in *The Criterion* (Vol. I, no. I), a quarterly Literary magazine founded and edited by Eliot himself, primarily for the purpose of publishing *The Waste Land*. Original 2 color printed wrappers, a small skinned patch, frayed at the overlapping edges, light foxing, a little dusty, but still very good, nice for this book. Something of an association copy. Ex-Ruth Wadsworth Porter (her signature on the cover), the wife of James Foster Porter, and mother of Fairfield and Eliot Porter, T.S. Eliot's (2nd?) cousins, so it's not irrational (considering the relation) to propose that our copy of *The Criterion* may have been a gift from T. S. Eliot himself. Or not. **5,000**



The *Waste Land* first appeared in this periodical in early October, but follow the progressive history as it unfolded. The second appearance (the first in the U. S.) was in the November 1922 issue of *The Dial* magazine (actually issued later in October). In December 1922, *The Waste Land* was first published as a book (in New York) by Boni and Liveright (1,000 copies), adding the author's notes, and as part of their agreement, *The Dial* bought 350 copies of Boni and Liveright's book, being 70% of the copies that have long been singled out as that publication's 1st binding and 1st issue (calculated as 500 by their numbering). And then, in September 1923, along came the first U. K. book edition (The Hogarth Press, 450 copies). Now forget all that. Our *Criterion* is the original, *The Waste Land*'s first glimpse of the light, a genesis so overflowing with significance, that it being offered at such a sensible price, brings us to contrasts so absurd, that they're even noticed by the morally unemployed highwaymen of the internet, and I say that thoroughly sterilized of even perfunctory regret. And this *Criterion* is amply scarce with only 1 copy of it listed in the auction records for the last 10 years (\$3,250 hammer in 2006), and that copy was described as being in 3 pieces with its wrappers detached (you can look it up in the tornography), but I can tell you that it was more unlikeable than someone who sets a wet glass on your favorite book.



Eliot, T. S.

Ash Wednesday
(NY, 1930).

1st edition. **Number 267 of 600 copies signed by T. S. Eliot.** 400 were for sale in America and 200 in Britain concurrently; this copy one of the former, but all 600 precede the trade edition by a few days. Original cloth, fine, original tissue dustjacket with small chips (photographed in the jacket), original paper slipcase with rubbing and with a small, loose chip from the bottom panel put back and secured. You can buy this copy or not, but don't buy one without the jacket and slipcase, and that's true of any book when complete copies are available (Book Code). **1,500**

Eliot talked funny because he came from a foreign country (Missouri), but he could sure write, and what he wrote showed that his artist's insight was not grounded in what he thought, but in how he thought.

TRIUMPHAL MARCH

BY T. S. ELIOT



DRAWINGS BY E. McKNIGHT KAUFFER

sibling association

Eliot, T. S.

Triumphal March
(London, 1931).

1st edition, 1st issue, preceding the limited edition by 3 weeks. A contemporary signed presentation copy, inscribed (in ink) to his sister, Margaret Dawes Eliot. Original wrappers, a few creases but very clean and near fine. 1,750

If you don't understand how someone could love their sister and, at the same time, want to cut off her hair while she was sleeping, then you were an only child.

**the first translation into English
of anything by Goethe**

Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von

The Sorrows of Werter
(London, 1779).

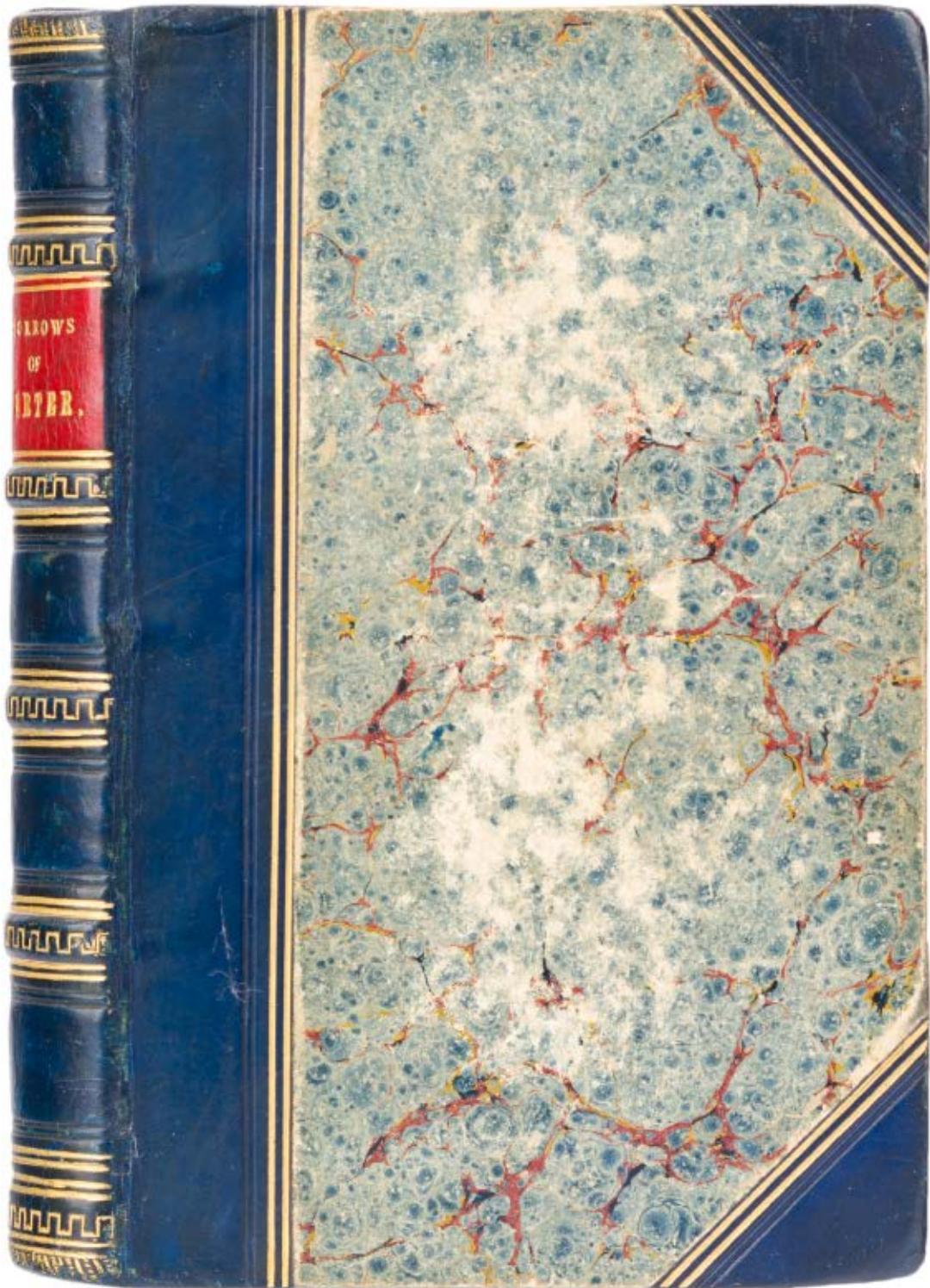
2 vols. in 1. 1st edition in English, translated by Daniel Malthus, father of the celebrated economist. 19th century *3/4 blue* calf, morocco label, marbled boards, no half-titles, sides rubbed, corners slightly worn, endpapers stained in a few places, else near fine, the text clean, the binding solid. This is the kind of book that's safer than the promises in a Volvo commercial, and the antidote for building a library 1 mistake at a time. The auction record (ABPC) shows only 2 copies sold in the last 40 years, 1 of them twice (the Garden copy, 1989 and 1991, admittedly finer than ours, but not a lot finer). ESTC's census of institutional libraries recorded 11 copies. OCLC found 7 more, some of them imperfect or defective, and others of them so ugly they couldn't get fucked in jail, and anyway, 18 copies total, across the globe, in 234 years of hunting them down, validates that this 1st edition is scarcer than a 22 year old Hollywood waitress, who doesn't want to become an actress, and doesn't want to date the GEICO biker guy who's made out of money. **3,500**

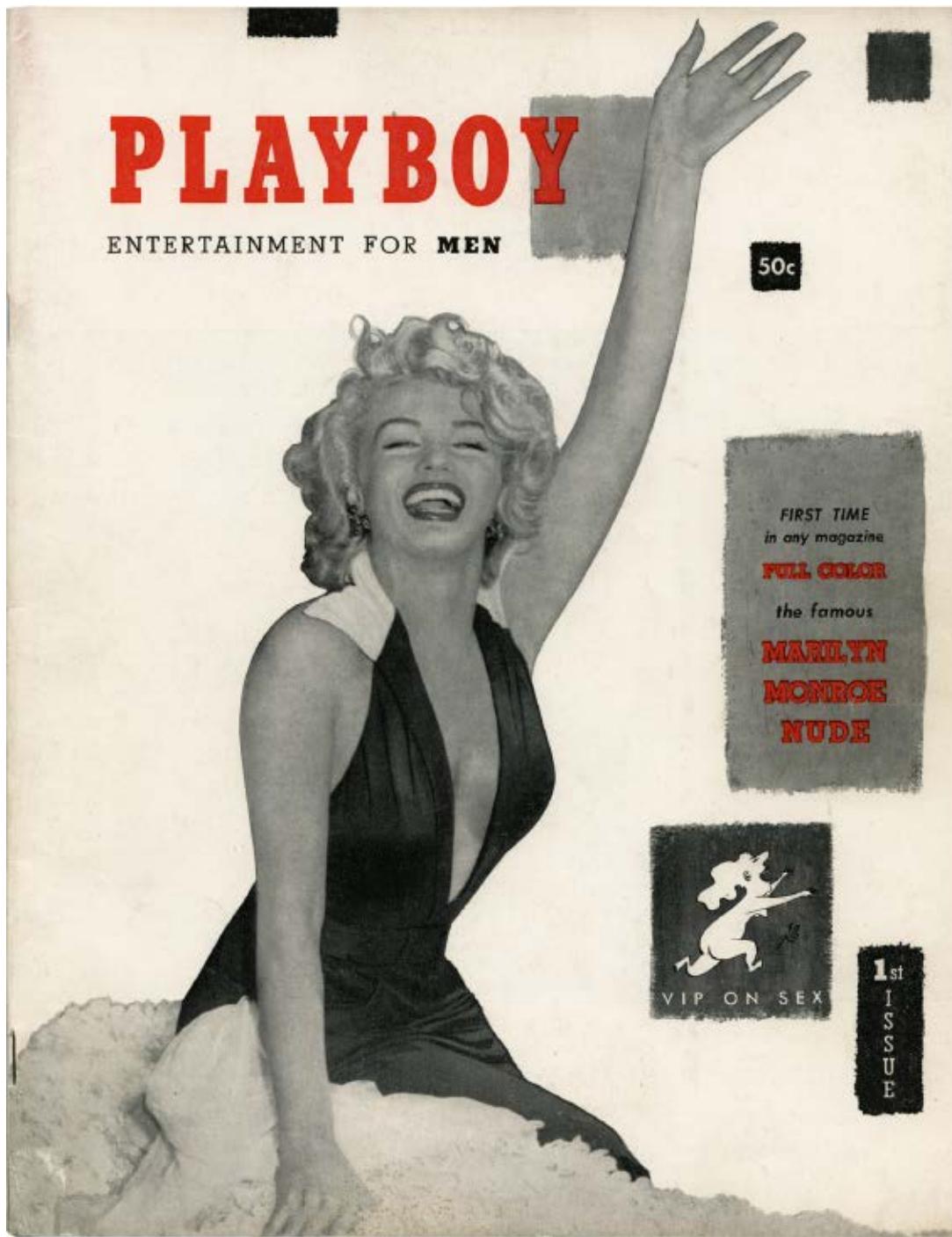
The Sorrows of Werter was autobiographical. Lotte, the object of Werter's passion was a thinly veiled Charlotte Buff, the herculean object of Goethe's own youthful fantasies (a young man with his first bottle of gin makes himself sick, a young man with his first girlfriend makes everybody sick). It was first published in 1774 (in German), became the foundational novel of Romanticism, and brought Goethe immediate and staggering celebrity across the Western world that can hardly be overstated, rivaling The Beatles 190 years later. "Rivaling The Beatles?" Check it out. Werter-Fever was the quill that became a torch. It inflamed pan-European young men who emulated Werter, an artist with a sensitive and passionate temperament, then dressed in Goethe's description of Werter's clothing, affected his manners, and, in an unprecedented tapout, adopted copycat suicides (dozens of them) as the fashionable response to unrequited love (before this, suicide had usually been a belated acquiescence to the opinions of one's in-laws). And its fame didn't fade away quickly. The young Napoleon channeled Werter, wrote a soliloquy in Goethe's style, and in 1798, he carried a copy of the 1776 French translation with him throughout his campaign into Egypt. 20 years after that, Frankenstein's creature taught himself to read with a found copy of The Sorrows of Werter, and contemplated suicide himself. And still it lived on. Carlyle roused the Goethe/Buff non-affair in Sartor Resartus (1836), Thackeray wrote a poem about it (1855), and 165 years after the 1st printing of "this book that would not go away" Thomas Mann wrote his Lotte in Weimar (Stockholm, 1939) in which Goethe has a reunion with his muse Charlotte Buff.

"You don't have to be afraid of looking into my face,

We've done nothing to each other time cannot erase..."

—Bob Dylan, We Better Talk This Over





presentation copy

Hefner, Hugh

Playboy Number 1
(Chicago, 1953).

1st edition of the first Playboy, a vestige of the 1950s hardly surpassable as a remnant of the changing times. Much the rarer (earlier?) of 2 states (issues?) with

page 3 numbered. A genuine presentation copy (a gift) sent from Hugh Hefner to John Basil who wrote to Hefner in 1955, offering \$5 for the 50¢ premiere issue. To Basil's surprise, Hefner responded by sending Playboy's own file copy of that issue, and taped into it (at page 1) was Hefner's "Nov. 21, 1955" signed letter of presentation on Playboy stationery, declining the 5 dollars.

"Dear Mr. Basil,

Anyone who would pay \$5.00 for the first issue of PLAYBOY thinks a good deal of the magazine and deserves to have that issue. I've dug this copy out of our editorial file, especially for you. Consider it a gift. Make your payment by continuing to boost PLAYBOY with your friends and giving lots of PLAYBOY gift subscriptions this Christmas.

Sincerely,

Hugh Hefner [signed in black ink]

Hugh M. Hefner

Editor – Publisher"

The letter: A 1/8" chip from 1 corner else it's fine. Basil's name and address is at the top and a note at the bottom verifies that there was an "enclosure" and that it was typed from Hefner's dictation by Janet Pilgrim, his personal assistant, a 3 time Playmate of the Month, and Playboy's first subscription manager (she actually phoned Mr. Basil to make sure he received his magazine). PSA authenticated.

The Playboy: A thin short break at the base of the fold (once held by a tiny piece of tape, now removed), else fine condition, CGC graded "Fine plus, 6.5" the deduction in grade for the tape at the fold and the tape holding the letter, but the magazine has now been un-slabbed (CGC's label preserved) and all 3 pieces of tape have been archivally removed leaving 2 barely perceptible shadows to page 1 (lighter than the shade that runs across the grass an instant before it loses itself in the sunset), and of course, those very shadows match those on Hefner's letter, forever confirming that it always accompanied, and was always attached to, this exact copy. Rare. No other authentic presentation copy (or file copy) of Playboy 1 is known to me, but I'll be forthright. No one can be sure what lurks in the backwoods, because the tools of census for the book trade are imperfect, and they are nebulous when applied to magazines, but this is the best copy in the world, so far. 9,000

Need I remind you that the nude centerpiece in this issue was Marilyn Monroe? And for you literary purists who only read Playboy for the articles and fiction, extracts from Doyle's Sign of Four and Boccaccio's Decameron are among the latter.

Playboy codified the separation of recreational sex (a satisfying link between 2 affectionate people) from procreation (a living message to a future time), and offered 2 ideas. That sex was the poor man's private jet, and that while sexual innocence is enchanting in young people, it's a needless aberration in mature adults.

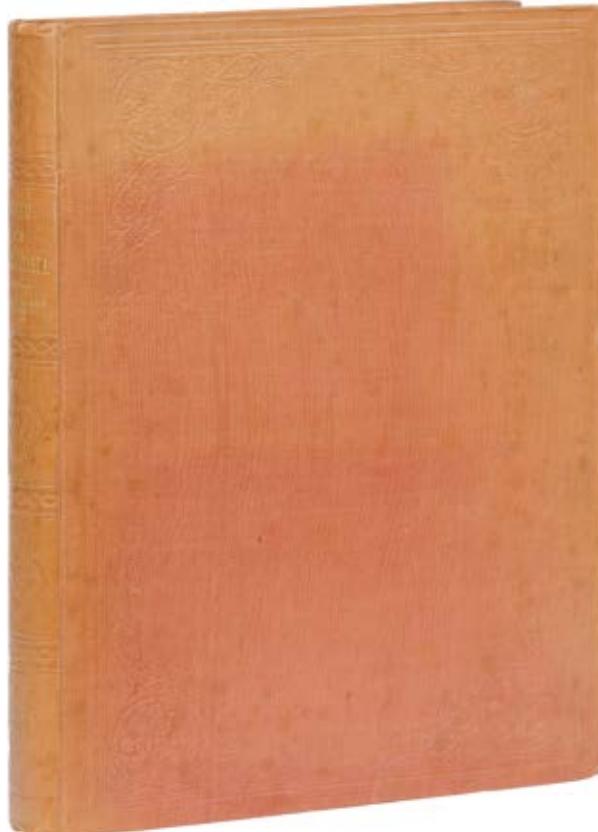
machinas Dei

Hero of Alexandria

The Pneumatics of Hero of Alexandria
(London, 1851).

1st edition in English. Original pink (light mauve?) cloth, some fading at the borders and spine, else near fine, unworn, and still glowing with much of its original shine, and though 1st editions in English of Hero are always for sale, they are typically ex-library, or look like they've been shelved in the brier patch. 1,300

Hero was a B. C. outlier, a scientist, inventor, and illusionist, best remembered as the designer and builder of the first operating steam engine, as well as numerous spectacular automations, and, as is evident from even the most cursory glance at this book, dozens of other devices, all but 1 of them captured in neat line drawings that accompany the text. And though there was a reprinting in 1854 and a facsimile



edition in 1971, this is the 1st and only credible English translation of Hero's function of toys and tricks in ancient Greece. Hero's dates are still uncertain. In 1851 they were thought to be between ca. 250 B. C. and ca. 80 B. C. though some newer research places him later, (in the period of Caesar and Augustus). His manuscripts survived in Arabic and their first Western publication was in Bologna (1547, in Italian), and Urbino (1575, in Latin, a translation by Commandine, that was later reprinted in both Paris and Amsterdam). 118 years later it was translated into Greek (Paris, 1693), but that 1693 translation was taken from Commandine's, and either hurriedly so, or lacking nominal scholarship, and it therefore failed to eliminate previous corruptions,

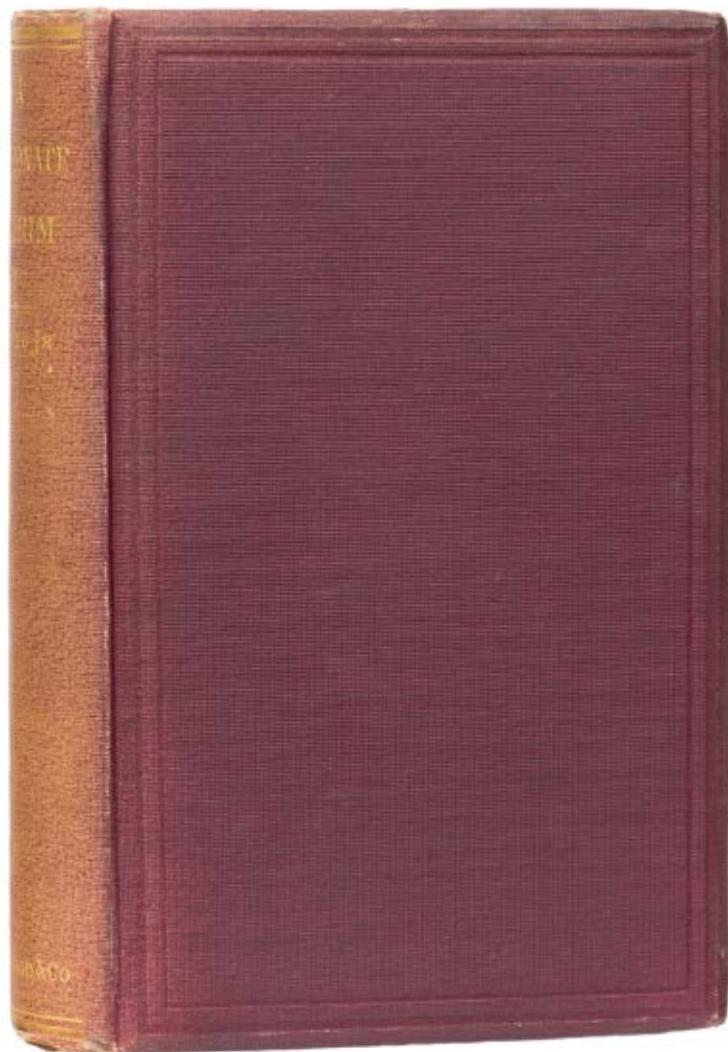
and added to them plentiful instances where entire clauses were overlooked. Our edition was translated from a thorough analysis of the 4 manuscripts in the British Museum by Bennet Woodcraft, Professor of Machinery at University College, London, and it was precise, exacting, and remains, by far the most trustworthy.

It's a small matter, but only in a Biblioctopus catalog will you ever find beautiful 1st editions in English of Goethe and Hero, with Hefner's Playboy in between them.

James, Henry

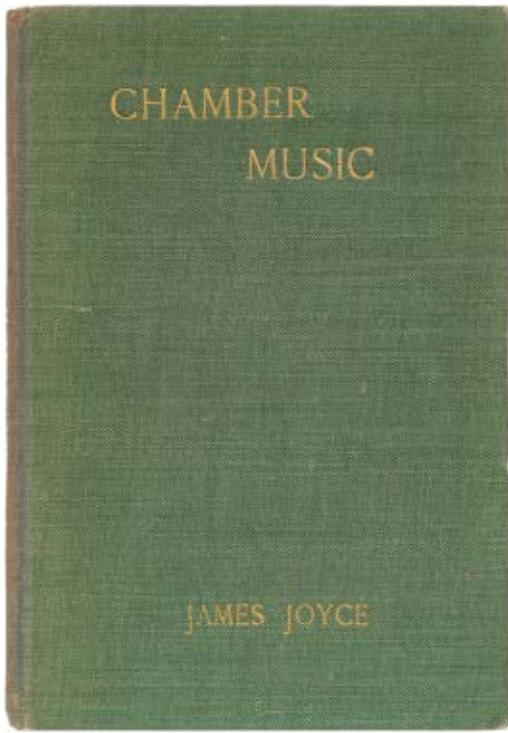
A Passionate Pilgrim and Other Tales
(Boston, 1875).

1st edition of his first book. 1st binding with J. R. Osgood & Co imprinted at the base of the spine. Original purple cloth (also issued in terra cotta and green), spine faded, minor rubs to tips, else near fine, the cloth clean, and the endpapers uncracked. 1,510 copies were printed, then, as J. R. Osgood & Co. evaporated into non-existence, the 1,510 were divided into 3 progressive binding states (issues in this case), over 7 years. A primary binding with "J. R. Osgood & Co." on the spine, a 2nd binding with "Houghton, Osgood & Co." and finally a 3rd with "Houghton Mifflin & Co." Reference: Edel and Laurence A1. BAL 10529. 850

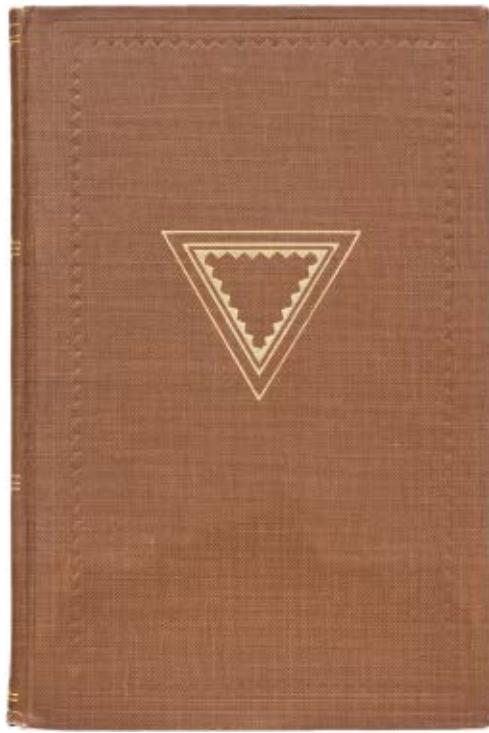


Henry James could write fine prose, and his practice of refracting life through the mind and temperament of an individual, was a slice of insight that

he understood best, especially early on, say, up to and through *The Aspern Papers* (1888). He had 2 major themes that worked for him. The first was equating sinfully urbane Europeans with exuberantly guileless Americans (despite his irrepressible penchant for the propaganda of personal snobbery). The second was creating a young, strong, high-minded, but unsophisticated female character, and then nullifying the false security she would cling to. The 2 themes had withered and collapsed by *The Tragic Muse* (1890), so he spent the rest of his life in that final refuge where the thoughtless are not wordless, trying to write perfect sentences and then string them together to make a perfect novel, rather than finding something new worth saying, and writing a perfect read.



Joyce, James



Chamber Music
(London, 1907).

1st edition of his first book. 36 short poems, all of them lighter than a cat's footfall, 34 of them about lonely love (here's a subtlety: loneliness is pain, solitude is joy). 2nd binding and issue (ca. 1915) with thicker wove endpapers. There's a lot of hype surrounding the 1st binding and it being such a rarity (50 or 100 copies from the 509 total 1st printing is often cited), awfully suspicious (call it a lie) in the face of half a dozen copies always being available for sale (175 of the 509 would be closer to the truth). I think this 2nd binding is actually scarcer than the 1st (the 3rd is more common than extra packets of ketchup), but I (properly) didn't let my appraisal of comparative scarcity interfere when I priced it, recognizing that 1st is to 2nd, as ideas are to gossip. Original cloth, spine faded, else a very good copy. **2,000**

signed by Joyce

Joyce, James

Anna Livia Plurabelle
(NY, 1928).

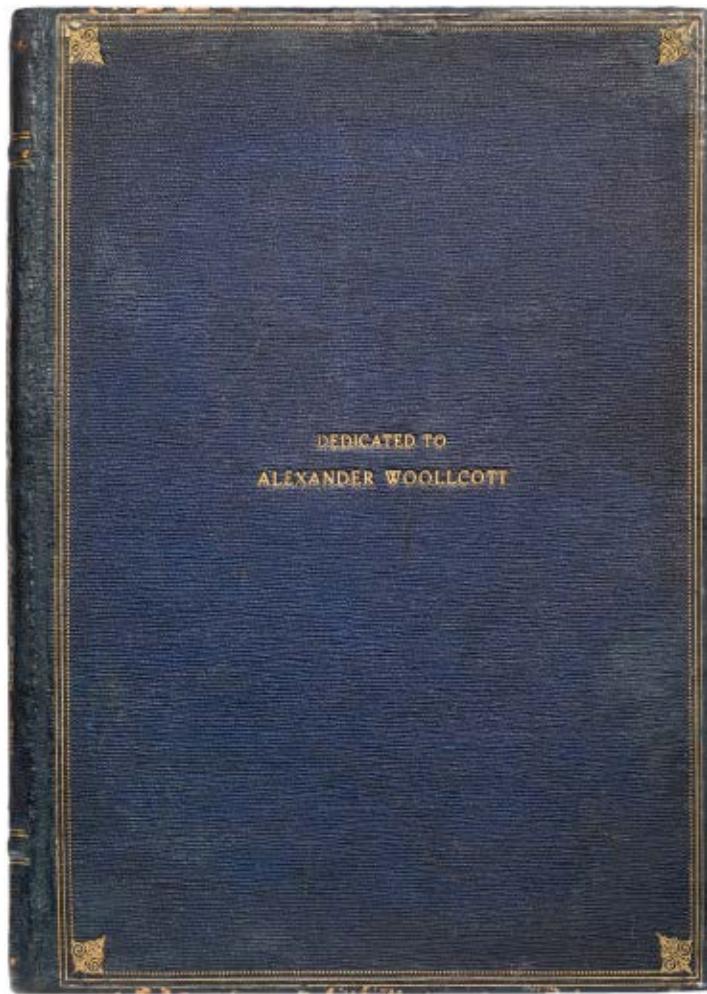
1st edition (precedes the London edition). **One of 800 signed (from a total of 850).** A preview fragment from (call it a trailer for) *Finnegan's Wake* (Joyce's 1,000 piece jigsaw puzzle that's all sky), which wasn't published until 11 years later in 1939. Cloth, lower third of covers with a water stain, thin offset from it to the extreme lower margin of first and last few leaves, minor paper flaw to a blank leaf's verso, but withal very good, nicer than it sounds (see photograph), but priced taking the watermarks seriously, rather than opting to reckon them ignorable. **2,250**

the dedication copy

Kern, Jerome

Good Morning Dearie
(NY, 1922).

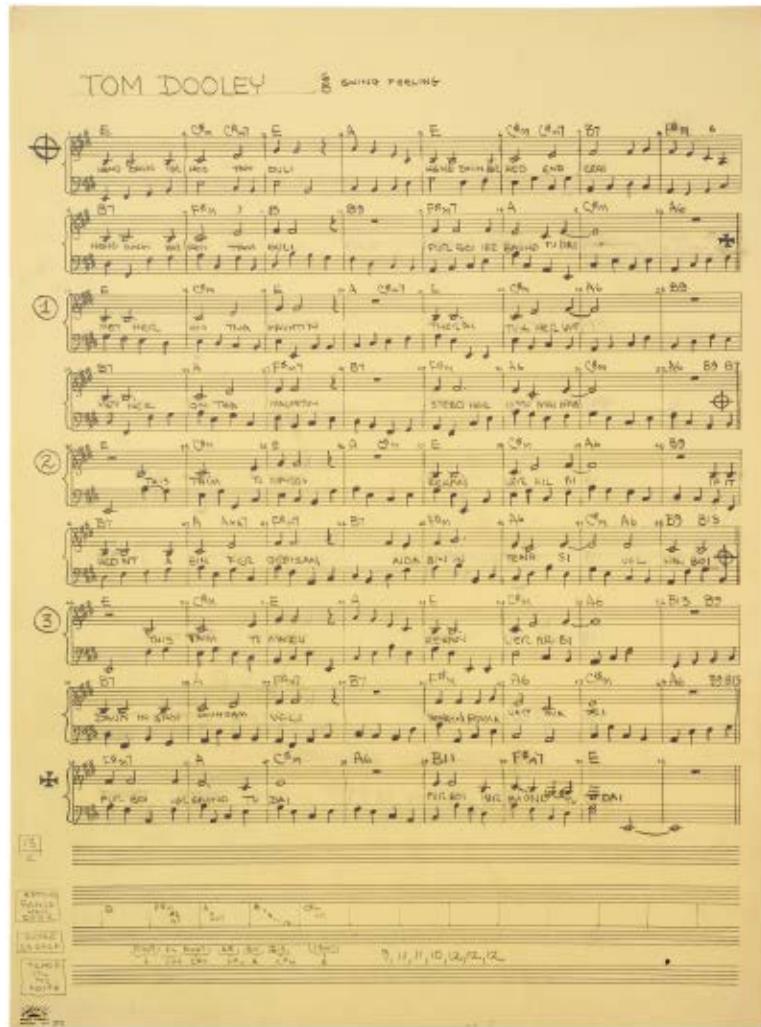
1st edition. Signed presentation copy, inscribed on the title page (in purple ink) incorporating the printed title, "To Alexander Woollcott, who said he liked [Good Morning Dearie] from his Sincerely, Jerome D. Kern, Mar. 15,



1922." The dedication page reads, "Dedicated to Alexander Woollcott by one of his grateful admirers Jerome Kern." Publisher's (unique) presentation binding of midnight blue full morocco commissioned for this copy specifically. The front cover reads (in gilt), "Dedicated to Alexander Woollcott." The spine's rebacked (original spine laid-down) and the covers have been strengthened and repaired, but what's important in an oven mitt is the hand that's inside it, and this is the best copy of this book in the world. **4,000**

The musical opened on Broadway Aug. 1, 1922 and ran for 10 months. This book of it

(every note and all the lyrics) is a heavyweight association copy, and a theatrical trinity, linking Anne Caldwell, who wrote the words, the most successful woman playwright and lyricist of her day, Jerome Kern, who wrote the music, the leading composer (at least until Gershwin arrived on the scene), and quite a polished book collector who sold his elite library at auction, for world record prices, 2 months before the stock market vaporized in 1929, and, of course, Alexander Woollcott, a founding member of the Algonquin Round Table, and an acerbic wit, entrenched at The New Yorker and on CBS radio, as the foremost literary critic of the 1920s, a man with an ego so big it applied for status as a National Park.



the public finds out there is a folk music revival happening,
likes it, grabs it, and runs with it

[The Kingston Trio]

Tom Dooley
(np, 1958).

The original recording session manuscript, all handwritten by Dave Guard, founder and leader of The Kingston Trio, and the only one of them who could actually write music. Titled at the top, then all the chords, music and lyrics (even phonetically), all in dark pencil, with a few neat corrections, on the recto side of a 12" X 16" sheet of yellow music paper. Fine. The Trio's record (3 verses, 4 rounds of chorus) hit number 1 on the U. S. Billboard Hot 100, sold 6 million copies, won the very first Grammy Country Award (1959), was inducted into the National Recording Registry of the Library of Congress, and (of historic importance) its commercial success started the 7 year "folk boom" clearing the mainstream for such as Peter, Paul and Mary, Bob Dylan, and then "folk rock's" The Byrds and The Animals. 3,500

Do you Believe in Magic

Do you believe in Magic
in a young girl's heart
How the music can free her
Whenever it starts
And it's Magic
if the music is groovy
If It makes you feel happy
like an old-time movie



John Sebastian Jerry Yester
Steve Boone Joe Butler

number 216 on Rolling Stone's list of
The Greatest Songs of All Time

[The Lovin' Spoonful]

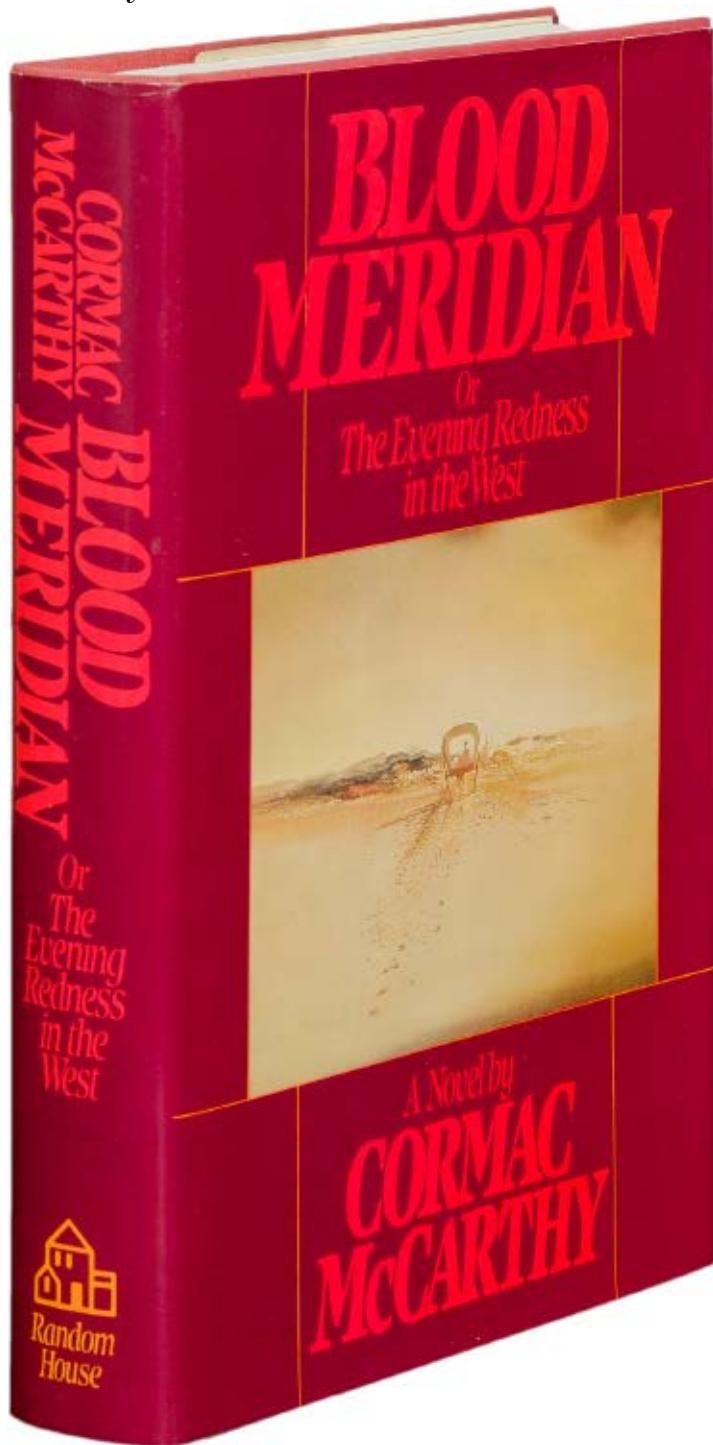
Do You Believe in Magic?
(np, 1965).

Handwritten manuscript, signed, of Do You Believe in Magic? the title song from The Lovin' Spoonful's 1st album. 8 lines of lyrics, in blue ink, a fair copy of the first verse, all in the hand of Joe Butler, all on the recto side of an 8 1/2" X 11" sheet of paper. Titled at the top, and concluded with a small drawing of a heart, and then signed at the bottom by Butler, Steve Boone, John Sebastian, and Jerry Yester. Fine condition. Their question was, Do You Believe in Magic? I'm asking, who killed Aquarius? 450

48 years later a new poll by the AMA found that 70% of Americans are taking prescription drugs. If you find that depressing, ask your doctor about Cymbalta.

repackaging the West

McCarthy, Cormac



Blood Meridian
(NY, 1985).

1st edition. Signed in ink by McCarthy on the title page. Fine in fine dustjacket. A copy from the publisher's original issue without remainder marks. I don't know what fraction of the 1st edition was unsold, but I'll guess that 1/4 of the copies got remaindered and had a stripe added to the page edges, identifying the 2nd issue. A scarce book when it's signed, so 1st editions are lipsticked-up with laid in autographs and offered at nefarious prices, that should incite the question, What do you take me for?

6,000

While many books are unjustifiably forgotten, no books are unjustifiably remembered, and Blood Meridian was initially seen as having less permanence than foot-prints on a mountaintop. Now it's established, and I'm predicting that it'll find its zenith as the indispensable 1980s novel, in any mid-21st century collection of American literature.

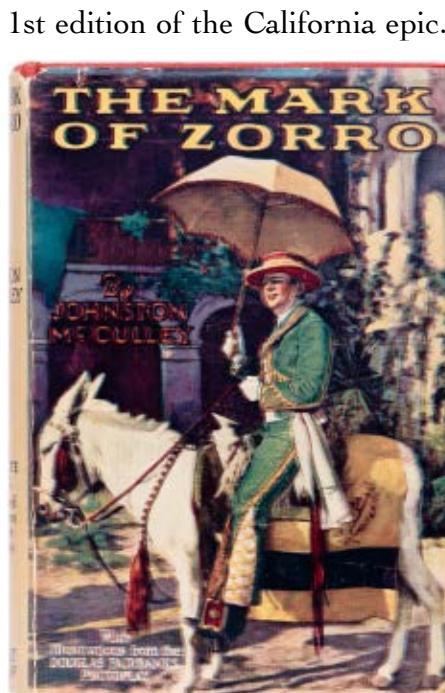
And since I'm auguring the future, I'll predict that in 1,000 years, archaeologists will dig up tanning beds and conclude that we fried criminals for punishment.

4 consecutive titles
about various kinds of Knights

∞

McCulley, Johnston

The Mark of Zorro
(NY, 1924).



1st edition of the California epic. Fine in the 1st printing dustjacket without the Grosset and Dunlap logo ("G&D") on the spine, and with Dec. 1924 ads on the verso. The jacket has small chips to the corners else it's near fine, and 1st editions of Zorro in the correct jacket are plenty scarce (despite us having 2 of them), and most copies in dustjacket are in the reprint jacket, and those few that are correct, usually look like they've been tortured by Torquemada and then shot by the Death Star. And copies without a dustjacket are just a submission to hasty expediency.

9,000

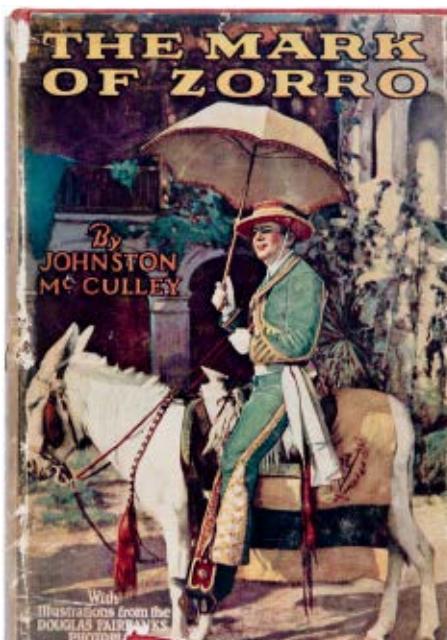
The shroud of tyranny, the call for liberty, the vision of destiny, the double identity, the secret oath, the waning moon, the hidden passage, the dark rider, the cape, the mask, the spurs, the sword, and the sign of the Z.

McCulley, Johnston

The Mark of Zorro
(NY, 1924).

1st edition. Near fine in a 1st printing dustjacket (having all points as above) with a chip at the base of the front panel, some wear and some skinned rubs, and with 1 fold strengthened, otherwise very good. 3,500

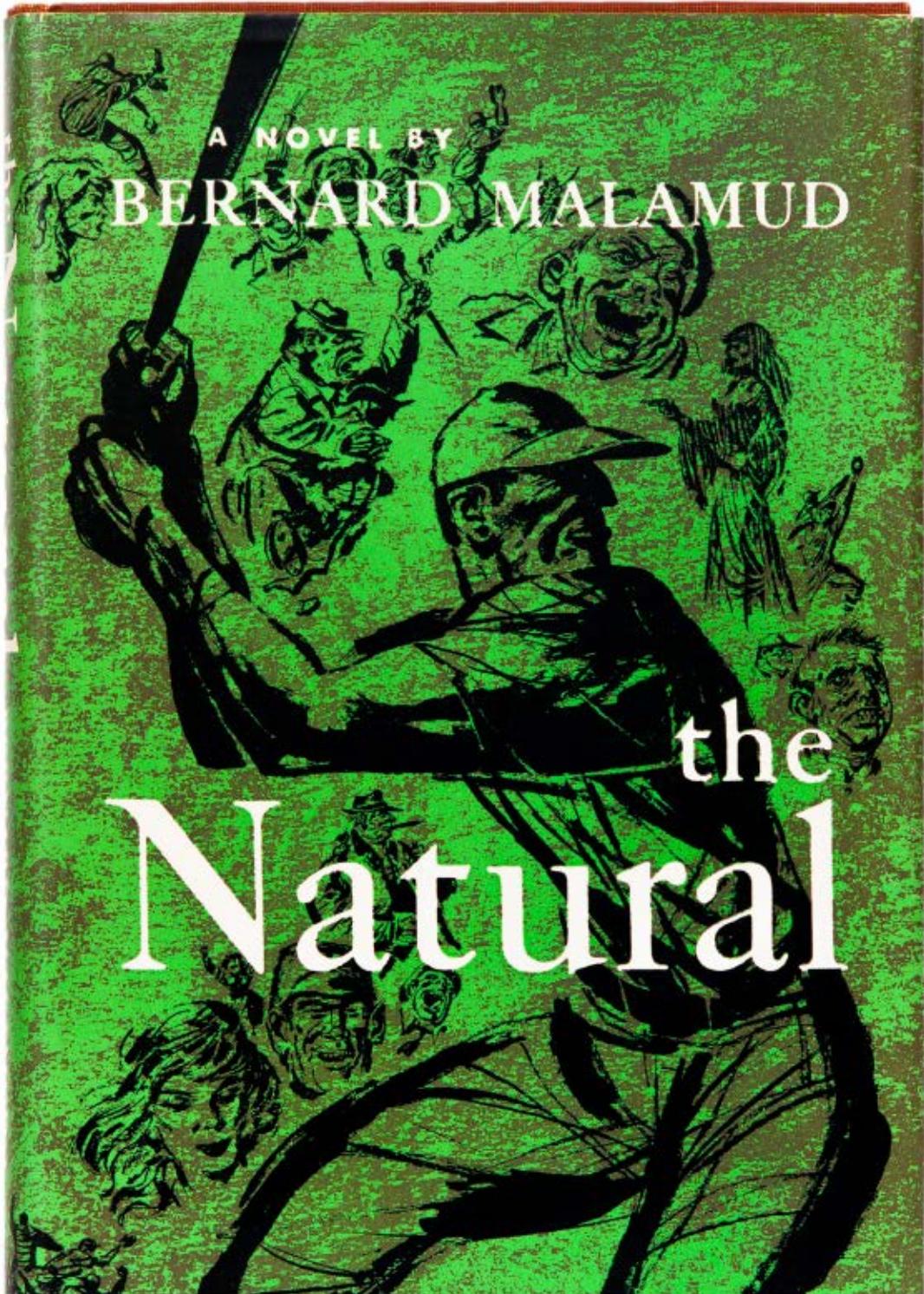
Grosset and Dunlap published mostly reprints, but not this one. There was a 1919, abridged version in All-Story Magazine titled The Curse of Capistrano, followed by an expansion of the story (written by McCulley, Eugene Miller and Douglas Fairbanks using one of his his pen names, Elton Thomas) for the 1920 U. A. film and for our 1924 novel, but reports of a 1920 book edition are a hoax.



A NOVEL BY

BERNARD MALAMUD

the
Natural



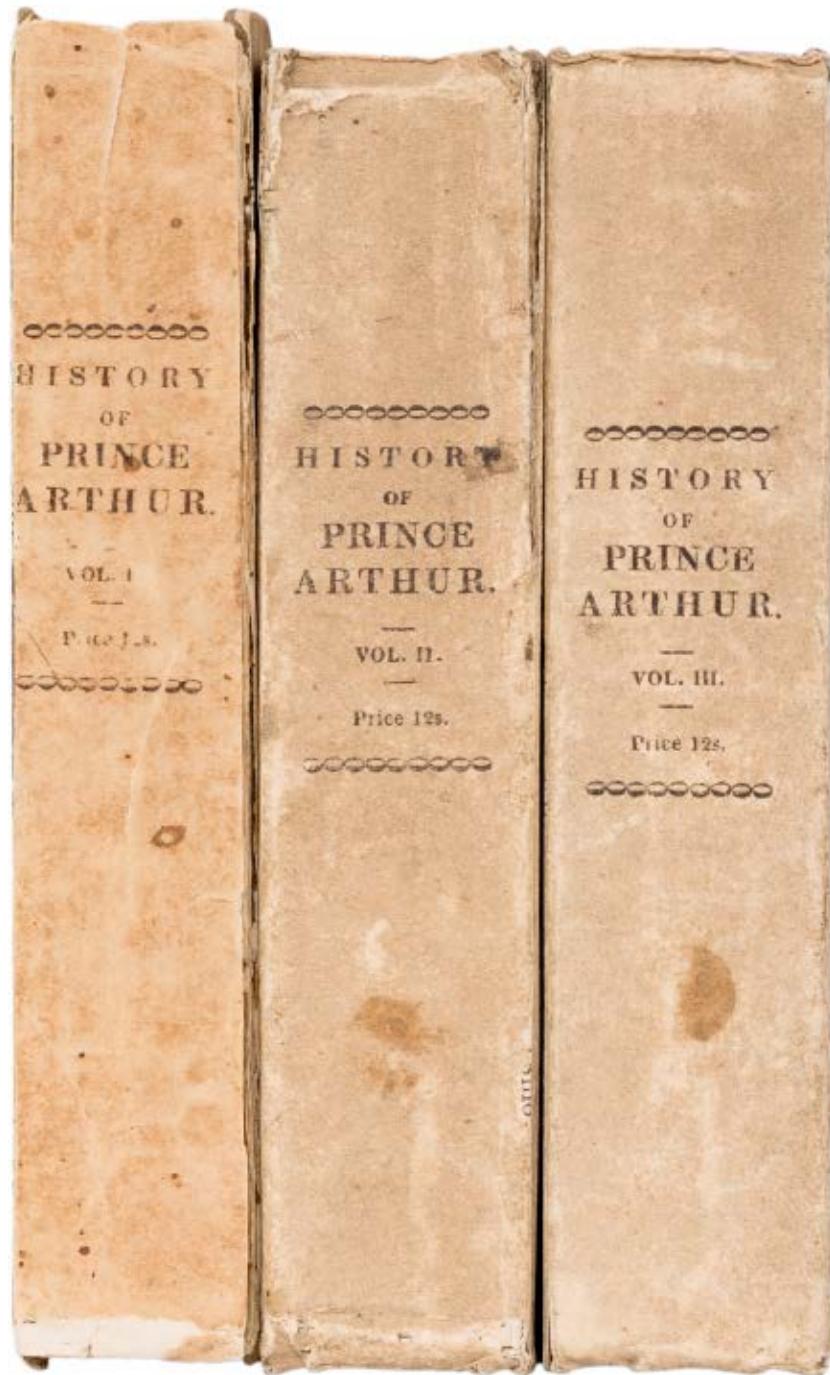
Wonderboy

Malamud, Bernard

The Natural
(NY, 1952).

1st edition of his first book. Fine in publisher's red cloth, one of 3 bindings without priority, but copies in gray boards are of a lower quality so may (or not) represent a secondary binding, and though almost all of the early 1st editions sent to Malamud as author's copies for presentation (those he dated 1952) that I've seen, were either in red or blue cloth, at least 1 of them was in the gray boards, so it's not a later issue (review slips cannot be trusted as they get moved from copy to copy). Dustjacket with a crease to the rear inner flap and a 1/4" tear, otherwise fine. An authentic, contemporary signed presentation copy inscribed "For Bonnie, Hector and the boys. Affectionately Bern. July, 1952." Malamud was a professor in Oregon in 1952, and did not have a large circle of friends outside of his academic loop, so fewer copies than you might expect, were gifted by him upon publication as presentation copies. That said, they're not rare. Yet. 11,000

The whole concept of city on city team games is one of the most evolved inventions of modern society, no less than a civilized substitute for war! Within that invention, Malamud reaches for the stars. It is, arguably, the best baseball novel, or the best sports novel, or the best sports film, but of any genus, or by any standard, it's a high calorie book with adequate light for those who are inclined to see, and adequate darkness for those who find themselves more comfortable in the noir. It's set in the 1930s, and the themes touch a succession of juxtapositions including, choices and consequences, morality and responsibility, and, of course, rise and fall. Woven through the plot line is a symbolic myth of initiation and isolation, drawing from paradigms of lore as distant as Chrétien de Troyes' Sir Percival (the original Arthurian quest for the Holy Grail), and as near as T. S. Eliot's The Waste Land, among others (some even earlier than the former, some even later than the latter). Malamud's motif is the tragic flaw, and the symbols galore accent birds (including Harriet Bird), water (rain, drowning), the vegetative cycle of spring (including Iris Lemon, who's name was changed to Gaines in the movie), trains (the book opens with Roy's train emerging from a tunnel, his rebirth at the age of 19), and the field (the playing field is The Waste Land), dry and parched when Roy arrives, but after his first hit, rain falls for 3 days and turns the field a vibrant green. And then there is his bat, Wonderboy, an Excalibur forged in lightning. Deep, layered, leveled, literate and profound, The Natural is a knight's tale of lost virtue, redemption and death, and by leaving out the death, it was made into a fulfilling movie, co-written by Malamud, Robert Towne, and Phil Dusenberry, directed by Barry Levinson, and starring Robert Redford, Kim Basinger, Robert Duvall, Wilford Brimley, Glenn Close, Robert Prosky, and Barbara Hershey as (Harriet Bird) the woman in black. And though Malamud parodies the idea of a "great American novel," The Natural has as many of the underlying ingredients as anything that's equally as serious, and anything at all written after The Wizard of Oz, and you aren't going to find a better copy of it.



earliest obtainable King Arthur in original boards

Malory, Thomas **The History of the Renowned Prince Arthur, King of Britain...**
[Morte d'Arthur]
(London [R. Wilks], 1816).

3 vols. 7th edition of the English epic (sanguinem et ferrum), preceded by 5 editions

(1485, 1498, 1529, 1557 and 1578) that are harder to find than peace and quiet (1 copy known, no copies known, 2 copies known, etc.), and then the 6th edition, published by Stansby in 1634, which was the first to be modernized to Jacobean standards, and the last to be printed in black letter. All 7 editions are faithful to William Caxton's original rendering of *Morte d' Arthur* into English, but even the 1634 edition cannot be bought in its original binding (like our set) for any price. Original printed paper boards and printed paper spines, uncut, complete with all blanks, half-titles, title pages (6), frontispieces (3), and the folding plate of The Round Table. Edges and joints lightly worn, bindings spotted, else very good, deflowered but not devalued, a little 12mo. jewel of an antique triple decker, now pushing 200 years old, and one that's always been more fragile than political honor. **3,750**

After Stansby's 1634 edition, 182 years passed without any edition in print. That struck 2 publishers (Walker & Edwards, and R. Wilks) as an unnecessarily long time and goaded both of them into a competition to fill the anticipated demand with 2 rival 1816 editions. The other edition (Walker's) is nearly identical to our edition but published in 2 volumes (vs. 3), and no bibliography I know, calls out any priority.

King Arthur is a cycle praising fellowship, pulsating home the heartbeat of a repeating refrain, that the virtue of each is the virtue of all, but don't you identify. To be proud of virtue is the path to losing both the reason for pride and the essence of virtue. Herein Arthur, Guenevere, Lancelot, Merlin, Galahad (and his Grail), Gawain (and his Green Knight), Percival, Tristram, Kay, Mordred, Morgan le Fay (the bad princess, not the bad dress shop), Nimue (the Lady of the Lake), Avalon, Excalibur (the sword in the stone), the Round Table, and all the other players and playthings from what abides firmly entrenched as the most frequently read, frequently referenced, frequently imitated, frequently filmed, and frequently accessed epic in the Western world.



The Return of the Queen

Martin, George

A Game of Thrones
Book One of A Song of Ice and Fire
(London, 1996).

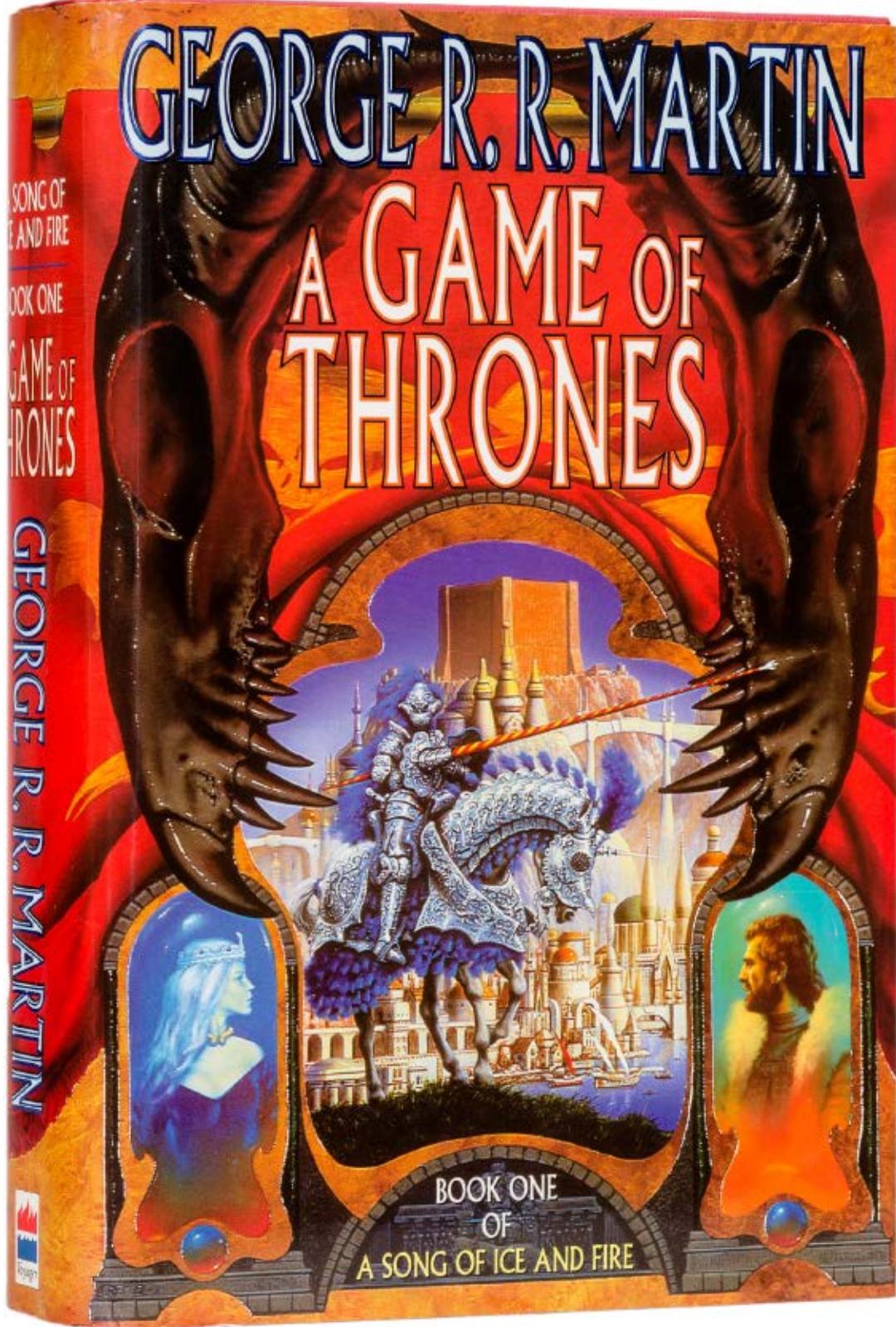
1st edition of the first book in the series, preceding the American edition and all others, a book so hot it could open an Olympics. **Signed (in ink) by Martin.** Fine in fine dustjacket. Epic fantasy girded with most of historical romance's obligations, and Martin is due major veneration for realizing the potential in fusing them, responding to the demands of both so well, and uniting them so seamlessly. The 5 books published to date, are a medieval 4,000 or so pages depending on the edition, with 2 books yet to come (or more, if Martin's mood wills it). Game of Thrones accounts for the first 694 pages of that, it's the only volume that's already scarce, and if the series has a future as valuable 1st editions, it will be carried to that future by this one. That's "if." So buy it with conviction, or don't buy it, but never get caught in the hype of FOMO (fear of missing out). I'm going to cover my eyes, grimace, hang a price on this book, not reflect on whether any 17 year old book is worth \$2,000, or fret if someone alleges they have one cheaper, or worry if someone will buy mine, and I'll find my self-respect by being the first person to write more than 50 words about A Game of Thrones without mentioning HBO. Oops. 2,000

Game of Thrones is what passes for a titan in "neoteric literature" (novels published in the last 20 years). I'm not dissing it, or its worthy brethren, or for that matter their immediate predecessors, the postmodern and nouveau roman novels, I'm just catching the breeze of which books are being read with passion, without inquiring into what it all means, or devising rationalizations for the carnivorous prices set on them in these shameless days, although those prices do require me to park my values, put my conscience to sleep, and then go out and crash a raucous party. When such things show up in my catalogs, it's because I am self-driven to offer the vintage, and they get herded here without any specific focus, comfort, ardor, or agenda, but with attention to condition, as all books this young should only be bought fine (when my friends have a bruised eye, I look at them in profile, but I do not indulge 17 year old books the same way). And I won't imply that any 1996 book will hold its value (if you want guarantees, go buy a toaster). On the contrary I'll note that in all the arenas of imagination, instant fame is often the bright lights of excitement obscuring a new name, and that a rising market is repeatedly the unfolding of miscalculations, so, though this particular 1st edition, and a few selected others of its kin, seem hip right now, they're only baby acorns, and yes, some will eventually become oak trees, but most will just become squirrel food, and all any of us can do is look to them...

"The way we look to a distant constellation,
that's dying in a corner of the sky,
These are the days of miracle and wonder,
...don't cry, baby don't cry." —Paul Simon, The Boy in the Bubble

∞

end of 4 books about various knights



MOBY-DICK;

or

THE WHALE.

—
BY MELVILLE.

NEW YORK

JAMES & BROTHERS

we're all in this alone

Melville, Herman

Moby-Dick
(NY, 1851).

1st American edition, 1st binding, of Melville's twisted and layered phantasm of life, a bottomless epic with the ultimate richness of purpose and presentation, sifted through the mellow narration of Ishmael, the assuring observer, articulate reporter, active participant, and lone survivor. Original brown cloth (6 other colors also seen, with no priority), orange endpapers (the usual). A good, tight copy with more than its share of faults, the worst of them a water stain to half the back cover that's offset some to both rear endpapers, spots on the front cover, joints worn, spine tips chipped, and foxing throughout, but it's sound and it's complete, and it has some other assets too, including bright gilt, uncracked original endpapers, and it's never been restored or rebacked. Perfect copies seem not to exist, so at the point of purchase the question becomes, how much extra do you want to pay for all the variables of lauding adjectives foisted upon copies that are not fine, and how much razzle will you believe from a seller trying to write off, or pass over, endemic damage, while presenting one of those less than fine copies as something they are not, and therefore worth a swollen premium? And while Moby-Dick is a great, book, the only thing rare about it (there are always a dozen 1st edition for sale) is that it's rarely seen at a fair price, and to pay long money for the parody that it is a rare book, is to jump into a sea of circling fins.

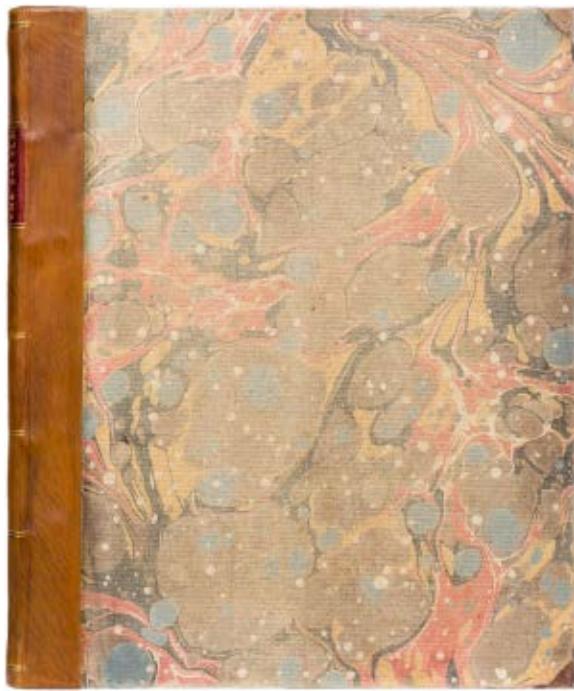
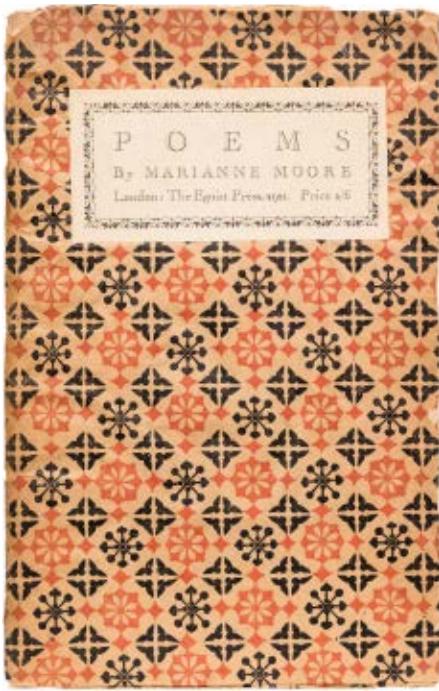
18,500

"Sin that pays its way can travel freely, and with a passport, whereas virtue, if a pauper, is stopped at all frontiers." —Father Mapple (in Moby-Dick)

Melville wrote Moby-Dick, but Moby didn't write back. 3,000 copies were printed. They confused the public, sold slowly, and an 1853 warehouse fire burned the rest, and no one seemed to mind at all. The reprints were few, their numbers were small, and his later novels sold even slower. "Write down to your readers," said his publishers. The failure harpooned Melville, but great ships seek deep waters. Knowing that his critics were open and dumb as a gutted bell, and faced with pandering to masses who sought fiction reflecting their passing fashion, or forsaking all commercial success, he transmuted into The Hermanator, and sailed to his genius. His career waned, and he died in obscurity, bitter, alone, impoverished, and forgotten, and he stayed forgotten until his rediscovery in the 1920s, undeniably the major literary archeology in the history of American fiction.

In an ecological affront to every one of us, half a continent of trees have died to manufacture books analyzing Moby-Dick, all with enough hot air to float a Macy's parade. Most strain to resolve unasked questions, or seize a vague reality with less future than a cold beer in a muggy fraternity house, and the rest flail away, seeking some empty freedom by being more pretentious than a 15 year old girl's diary.

American lit? I love it all,
From Washington Irving, to Gore Vidal.



signed

Moore, Marianne

Poems

(London, 1921).

1st edition of her first book. Original wrappers, chipped at the corners and strengthened at the inner margins, else very good. **Signed on the title page (in ink) and she has made a 1 letter correction to the table of contents, and then repeated it at page 9.** Not a scarce book, even in the original wrappers, with 10 or so copies always out there for sale, but it is scarce when it's signed. 1,000

1st printing of Bas Bleu

More, Hannah

Florio: A Tale,
and The Bas Bleu; or Conversation
(London, 1786).

1st edition. 20th century half calf over marbled boards, morocco label. Near fine, with both title pages and the page of ads at the end. Always thought to be a common book by the generation of booksellers before me (the crusties), and our price shows that we have bought into that assessment, and yet no copies of this London 1st editions are currently for sale, and no copies of this London 1st edition (and just 1 copy of the 2nd edition, 1787), have sold for the auction record in the last 35 years, ranking it among the rarest "common" books in the world. Collation: v+(3)+ 89+(1) blank+ad leaf. 750

Hannah More (1745–1833) was a literary colossus, the bestselling of the female bluestocking writers in the later period of that salon, comprised of both genders,

and devoted to establishing the intellectual credentials of women. Her 351 line poem (this poem) *Bas Bleu*, became their anthem, and in her career as an author, she outshined the others without ever becoming pedantic. She was a triumphant playwright and poet, and an early and powerful and (most meaningfully) a public voice for the abolition of slavery. She published political articles for the working class, and she was the principal fount of cheap repository tracts (she wrote dozens of them), those modest 8 page tales of quaintness and whimsy that were carefully and simply constructed, but shrewdly written, and then published for a penny, with the focused goal of encouraging the poor to read. And surprisingly, she not only unleashed the educational side of the miracle, but she also pulled off the financial side, selling 2 million copies of one of them (*The Shepherd of Salisbury Plain*), an unprecedented feat in the 1790s. She made a mini fortune, then scurried forward with the second stage of her scholastic aims, spending her cash to establish Sunday schools focused on fighting illiteracy, and in a model for achieving a cause by direct action and force of will, she assumed (and bore) the most problematic component of metamorphosing Britain into a literate nation by teaching reading to the sector of its citizens least exposed to (and least available for) education, impoverished and underprivileged adults. And yes, I am a Hannah More groupie.

"What is this power, you're loth to mention,
This charm, this witchcraft? 'tis attention:
Mute Angel, yes; thy looks dispense
The silence of intelligence;
Thy graceful form I well discern,
In act to listen and to learn;
'Tis Thou for talents shalt obtain
That pardon Wit wou'd hope in vain;
Thy wond'rous power, thy secret charm,
Shall Envy of her sting disarm;
Thy silent flattery sooths our spirit,
And we forgive eclipsing merit;
Thy sweet atonement screens the fault,
And love and praise are cheaply bought,
With mild complacency to hear,
Tho' somewhat long the tale appear,—
'Tis more than Wit, 'tis moral Beauty,
'Tis Pleasure rising out of Duty." —page 89

An important book, that'll be hard to find again, and it's undeniably inexpensive, but if you don't collect 18th century books, or women authors, or don't care for poetry, why are you interested in it? Collecting too widely carries the same penalty as having 20 children. You don't get to know any of them very well (Book Code).

And as for women poets generally,

"I would venture to guess that Anon, who wrote so many poems without signing them, was often a woman." —Virginia Woolf



Morris, William [and] Magnússon, Eiríkr **The Saga Library**
(London [Bernard Quaritch], 1891–1905).

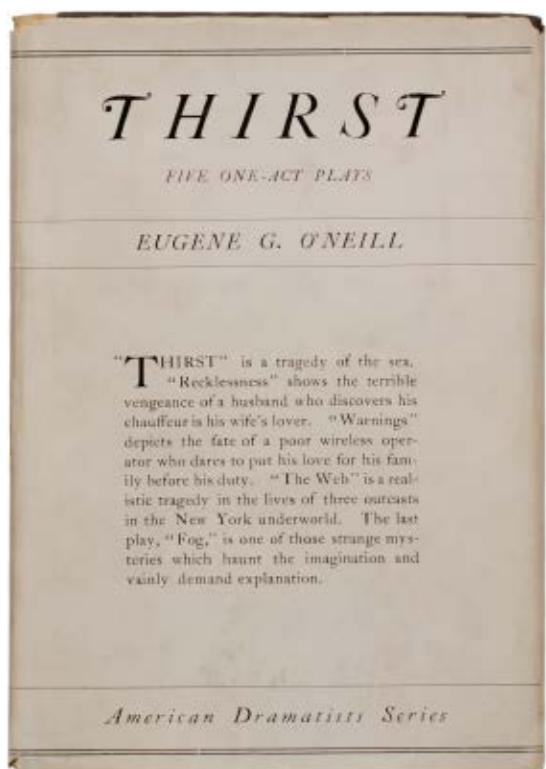
6 vols. 1st edition of the Viking epics. Original half green roan (5 3/8" X 7 5/8"), spines faded to tan, top half of vol. IV's spine re-set like a label and unfaded and a few unfaded areas below it, weird, but original, so the top half maybe done by the publisher, 1 small nick at the base of vol. VI's spine, offsetting to endpapers (more so in vol. IV from the glue used for the pastedowns), else near fine (partly unopened), complete with all maps and tables. The bindings were not manufactured for durability (the leather is more delicate than a diva's ego), so they're seldom seen this nice, and are often sold worn out, or ruined by the pillage of graceless repair, or incomplete (vol. VI is most recurrently absent), but our set (finer than any others out there) perseveres because it's either been hidden away for 108 years, or given the kind of care customarily reserved for tropical fish. 1,250

According to Tolkien himself this was a primary source for his Middle-earth and among the reasons that it occupied that basis is that it was a comprehensive gathering, and the only reliable translation into English, of the ancient tales and

histories of the Scandinavian Kings (Norsemen, or Vikings), those marauders of the medieval, who settled lands from Iceland, to the west coast of France (Normandy), to Kiev (down the Volga), sailed to Newfoundland, visited Bagdad, and (as Normans) conquered Britain. The translation was from the Icelandic because the inhabitants there were fastidious record keepers, and speak a language that is mostly unchanged from the 13th century, and it fell to them to keep the chronicles for the Scandinavians who were their earliest ancestors, and who documented (by comparison to the Icelanders) little of their history and legends.

The Saga Library is the 5th (and much the longest, most accomplished, and most grand) in a series of translations from the Icelandic by Eiríkr Magnússon and his favorite linguistic student William Morris, the same William Morris (1834–1896), who visited Iceland twice to research the books (1871 and 1873), but in his other guises was more well known as a Pre-Raphaelite Libertarian, an artist, illustrator, and poet, and the leading Victorian disciple of beauty for beauty's sake. His arts and crafts designs for stained glass, furniture, printed textiles, and tapestries, revolutionized the taste of the English public, and he was a fine architect, a founder of The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (forerunner of The National Trust), and he was the instigator of the Oxford and Cambridge Magazine. And one more thing. His Kelmscott Press was the best in the world.

Let me exaggerate: William Morris was 4 of the 10 greatest men of the 19th century.



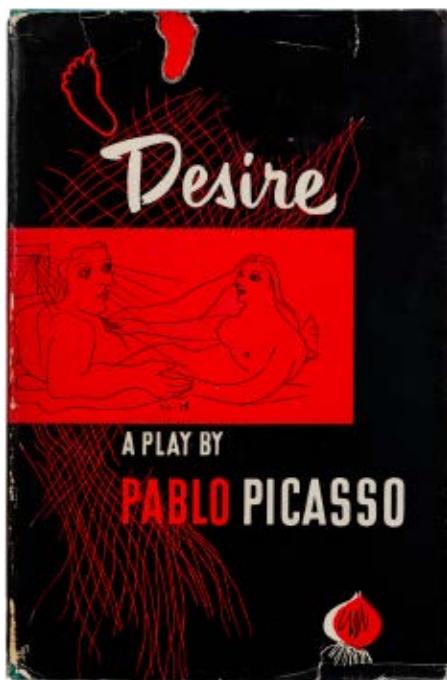
O'Neill, Eugene

Thirst

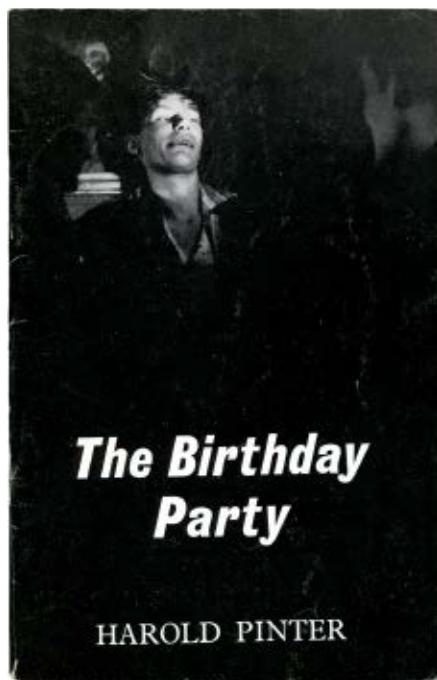
(Boston, 1914).

1st edition of his first book. The title drips some irony as O'Neill did his best work after he sobered up. Fine in a very good dustjacket with a scratch on the front panel, a small chip from the corner of the rear flap, and a "\$1.75 net" label on the spine. 5 early 1-act plays (4 of his first 5, plus Fog). 500

In the footsteps of Chekhov and Ibsen, O'Neil forced realism into the American theater with his own turn of New England vernacular, and a galaxy of hope filled characters struggling to find a wedge of the American pie, but in the end finding only the abyss. In 1936 he was honored (and enriched) as the 2nd American to win the Nobel Prize for Literature.



Picasso, Pablo



Desire
(NY, 1948).

1st edition in English of Picasso's play. Near fine in a chipped jacket (designed by him) else very good. The price is a cue that because someone is the best of the century at one thing, does not mean they are competent at anything else ("gee, I make so much money, I must be great at everything"). Patriarchal Picasso knew desire as burning active (an affair between a nail-gun and a paint shaker). He didn't know it as cooling passive (softer than shyness, and lighter than sparrow breath). 15

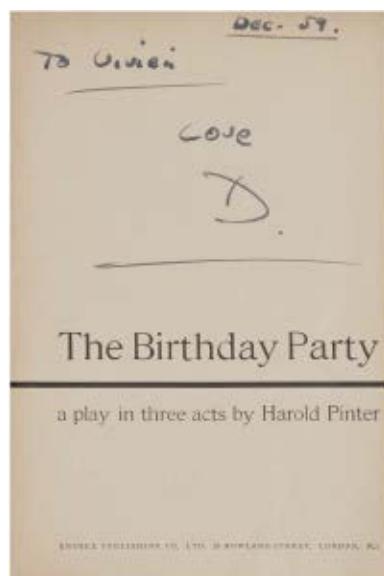
the dedication copy

Pinter, Harold

The Birthday Party
(London [Encore], 1959).

1st edition (precedes all others). The Nobel laureate's first book. Wrappers, near fine. Presentation copy inscribed to his wife, signed "D" (for his stage name, David Baron) and dated Dec. 1959. The dedication was not confirmed in type, that is, actually spelled out in a published (printed) publication until the 1961 American edition, but this is it, the best copy in the world. I'm thinking that it would be hard to imagine any copy, of any book, being more important to Pinter himself.

40,000

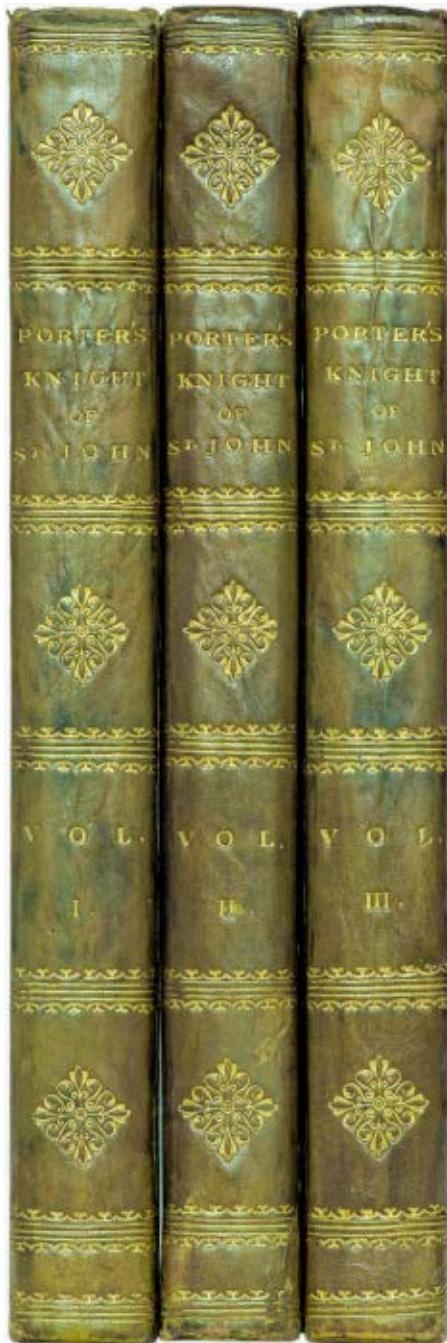


the provoking urgency of contingent happenings

Porter, Anna Maria

The Knight of St. John
(London, 1817).

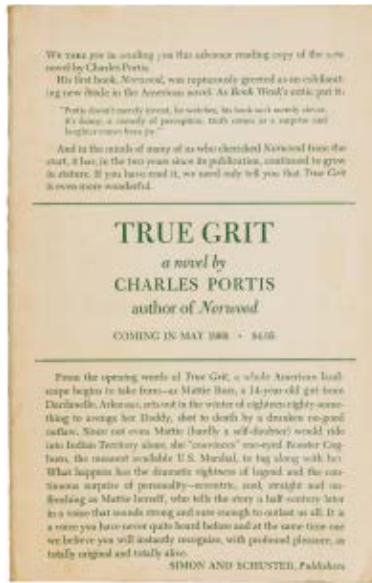
3 vols. 1st edition. Contemporary 3/4 calf, no half-titles in vols. II and III (not collated as wanting a half-title in vol. I), very good, clean, and scarce (only 2 sets have sold at auction in the last 35 years, both of them trashed). **3,500**



Anna Maria and her sister Jane (Anna the more prolific) met and befriended Walter Scott while the sisters were children, and Hannah More shortly thereafter. Scott had been a poet since 1796, but eventually realized he could not rival the likes of Shelley and Byron, so he watched with curiosity (and care) as Anna and Jane cut a path to the invention of historical romance. Anna's 1807 novel, *The Hungarian Brothers*, ratified the emerging genre, and inspired her older sister Jane, to turn (what would become) the major imperatives towards biography in *The Scottish Chiefs* (1810), with a chronology of William Wallace's life as the house, and a romance of fiction as the furniture within it. Scott surveyed Anna's methodology, deconstructed Jane's "biographical romance" and then warped one critical aspect of the latter, assigning the major roles to fictional figures and the minor roles to historical characters. In 1814 he published *Waverley*, and simultaneously articulated the rules, gained all the fame, and (by 1820) had become the Western world's best selling author. In 1817, sensible Anna ran to daylight and adopted Scott's formula for *The Knight of St. John*, with European history as the atmosphere and background, and a friendship between the heirs of 2 feuding families on center stage for the primary plotline.

All hail historical romance for combining history (often as not some real person drawing a line beyond which they will not be pushed) with fiction (the great evolved art form that animates all of the unactualized possibilities, as well as all of the imaginable impossibilities, in human life).

revenge



Portis, Charles

True Grit
(NY, 1968).

Advance Reading Copy of the 1st edition (in this case utilizing sheets from the 1st printing, and identical to it). Printed wrappers with a few crease to the spine from being read once or twice, still very good condition.

100

Source book for the Coen brother's staunch movie, an instance when the remake was adequately faithful to the original, so as not to demand hostile testing against it, unusual these days, as most remakes are less convincing than a dieter's promise, and less interesting than somebody relating a dream.

Portis, Charles **True Grit**
(NY, 1968).

1st edition. Aside from some light water spots, fine in fine jacket (our price ruthlessly compensates for the spots). A book about toughness, but it's not as tough to take as the dreaded voice mail that says, "We have to talk." **250**

"Mr. Goudy: I believe you testified that you backed away from Aaron Wharton.

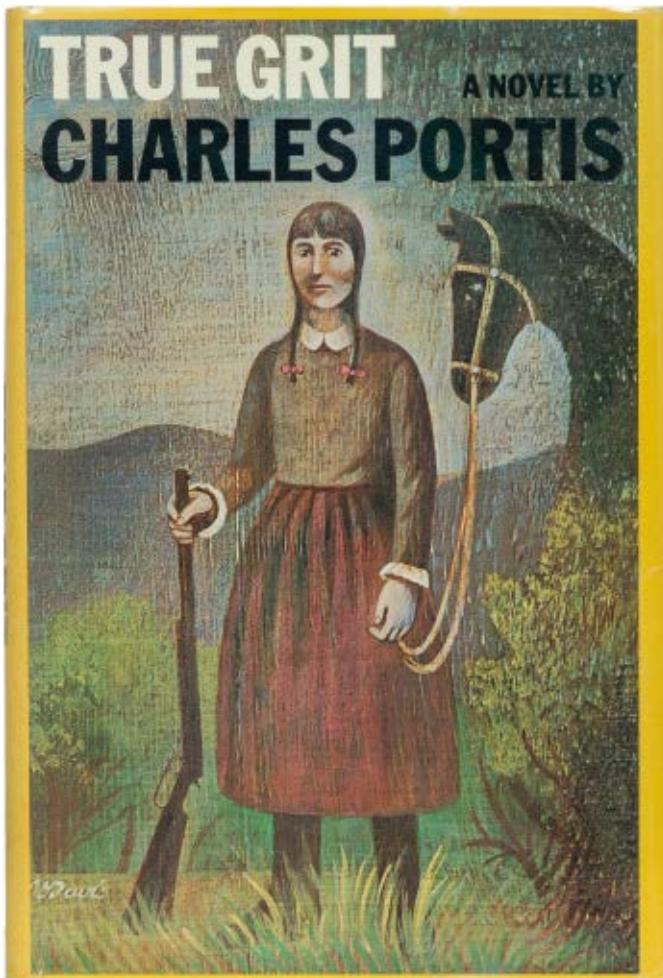
Mr. Cogburn: That is right.

Mr. Goudy: You were backing away?

Mr. Cogburn: Yes sir. He had that ax raised.

Mr. Goudy: Which direction were you going?

Mr. Cogburn: I always go backwards when I am backing up."



Post, Emily

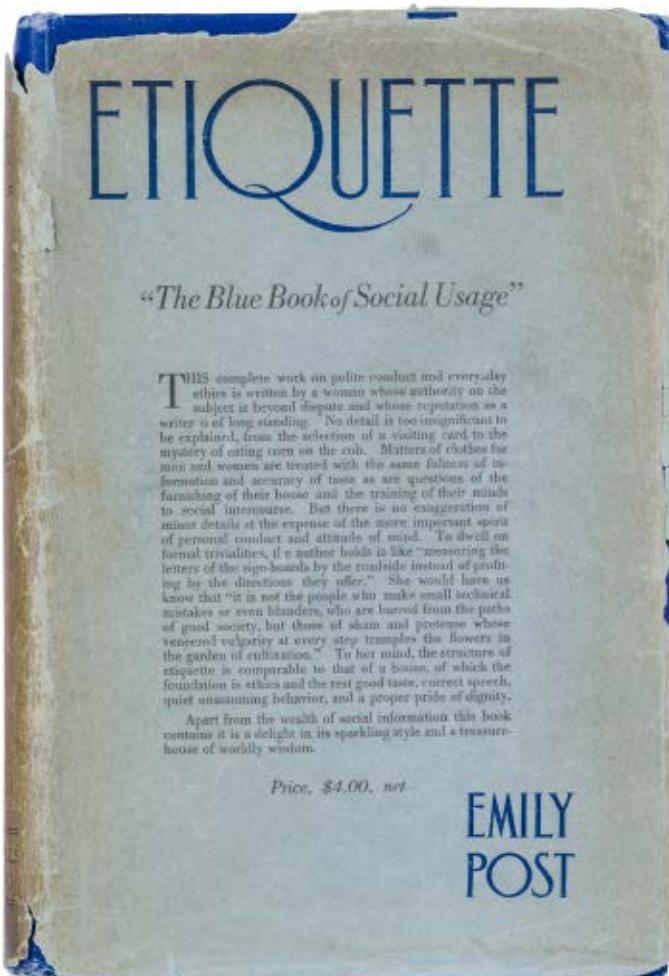
Etiquette In Society, In Business, and At Home
(NY, 1922).

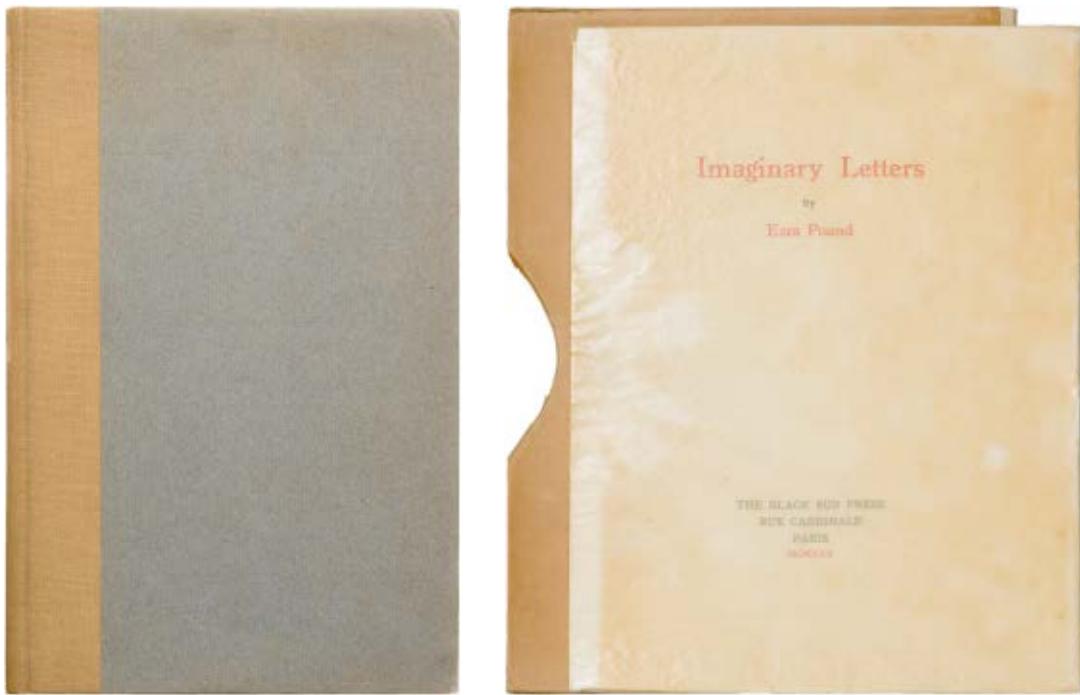
1st edition of "the blue book of social usage" with a superficially sappy but largely affirmative impact on modern life, suggesting throughout, that today's pervasive attraction to lights and commotion are not social instincts. Rubs to cloth at the extremities else fine and bright, in a jacket with tears and chips to the edges and folds, internal strengthening to the folds, and a darkened spine, else very good. This 1st printing is scarce in jacket and mostly unsung as such, since there are always copies for sale, but they typically lack their jackets or turn out to be later printings. 3,000

Etiquette means behaving a little better than is absolutely necessary. It is using hypocrisy as a tool for carving out felicity, so we pretend to be polite, practice it, and eventually we, in fact, become polite (fake it 'til you make it), and Post's book organizes and elucidates 1,000 ways to do so. The text has

been reworked and modernized many times to track changing lifestyles, but our book is the original, wide ranging enough to include the still useful (and pragmatic) guidelines of how to write a thank you note, or make an introduction, or walk the streets, and additionally the less useful (but more amusing) counsel on the responsibilities of a parlor maid, or how to manipulate a finger bowl, or how to address a Duke. I've found that I can open it to any page for an entertaining 10 minute read, and though it's overladen with affected demands for groundless civilities, it's always so prudent that the inch and a half it will take up on your shelf will prove worth the space whenever you crave diversion, and also as a vaccination against collector's focus acquiring the deadening effect of habit. Pure Americana baby.

Every now and then, I wish it was then, not now.





signed by Ezra Pound

Pound, Ezra

Quia Pauper Amavi
(London, 1919).

1st edition. One of 100 signed by Pound (from a total edition of 600) and with a text correction by him (as is almost always seen). Original clothbacked boards, paper label, 2 corners lightly bumped, but a fine copy. The title literally translates "I have loved for poor" and I don't know what Pound was actually saying but "Pauper Quia Amavi" translates as "Poor Because They Loved" and that's kinda sad. 1,800

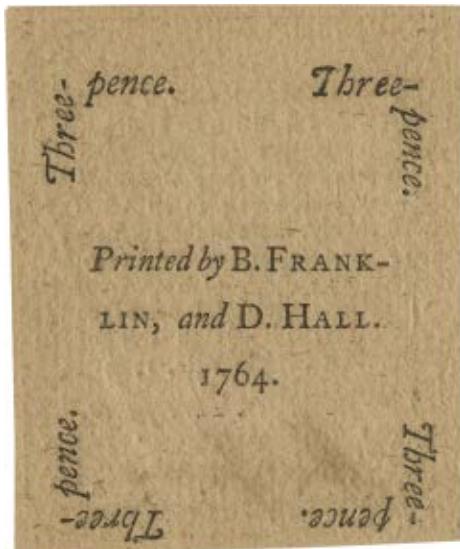
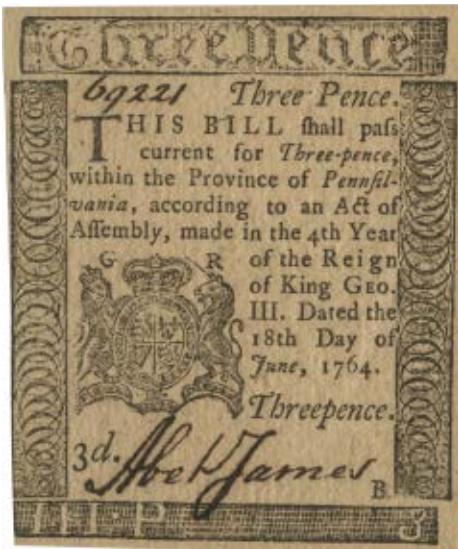
Pound, Ezra

Imaginary Letters
(Paris, 1930).

1st edition, one of 300 from a total edition of 375. Original wrappers, printed dustjacket, glassine dustjacket, and paper slipcase, a half kaleidoscope shaped patch of fading to the jacket's edge, else a fine copy, and buying this book in worn condition, or without all of its parts, will ultimately prove more annoying than the e-trade baby, and more dangerous than a wart-hog with his tail caught in a car door. 500

"Pound sought hectically for acknowledgment, not just for poetry but for himself, and lost the sense of both in the process." –Christopher Hitchens

These 2 books are from the era when Pound was the side-show barker at the circus of his own self-promotion, and still an adept juggler, a skill he displayed by keeping the people who knew he was crazy, away from the people who were not sure.



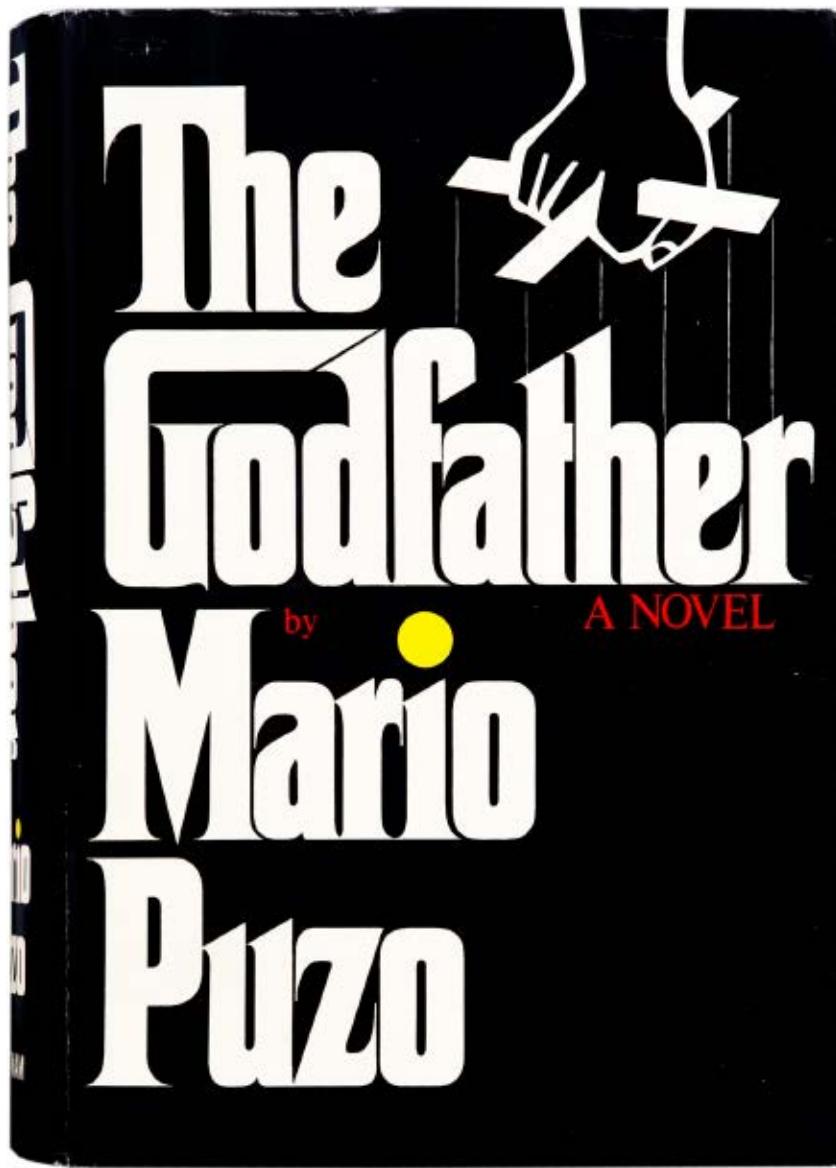
printed by Benjamin Franklin

[Printed Currency]

American Colonial Note
(Pennsylvania, 1764).

3 pence. Serial #69221 (2 1/4" X 2 3/4"). Fine condition. PCGS authenticated, slabbed (archivally sealed but easily removable), and graded "choice about new, 58 PPQ" (Premium Paper Quality) a special (additional) grade for only the highest quality notes. Bold embossing and striking eye appeal, an eminently persistent little piece of paper, only a faint, soft crease, more like a wave (lighter than a snowflake and half the impact) separating it from absolute perfection. Printed by Franklin and with his imprint ("Printed by B. Franklin, and D. Hall") on the reverse. Dated "18th Day of June, 1764" and stating: "This bill shall pass current for Three-pence, within the Province of Pennsylvania, according to an Act of Assembly, made in the 4th year of the Reign of King George III." Hand signed, in ink by Abel James (Franklin's homie, and an early American book collector), and hand numbered (bg 221). A scarce variety of note in any condition but this one is something elite, and stubbornly rare in this high grade. Franklin and Hall were partners from 1748 to 1766 and though this 249 year old note was printed by them, neither they, nor anyone else, used this specific one in commerce, as it could not have withstood any handling at all and still remain such a pristine example, much the finest I have seen. Reference: Friedberg PA-115. 3,500

This is the ancestor of the American paper dollar, the famous greenback, originally issued as legal tender in 1862 (a Civil War necessity). It became the supreme utilitarian device, and the world renowned printed symbol of power, and though it's easy to slander America (and it's long been thought uncool to praise it), slap yourself and wake-up. You can fairly, and respectfully, argue the details of how to govern, but America is (and always has been) a massive, institutionalized intrigue of crafty, conniving, colluding schemers, all conspiring to make you happy.



volatilia ad sibi similia convenient

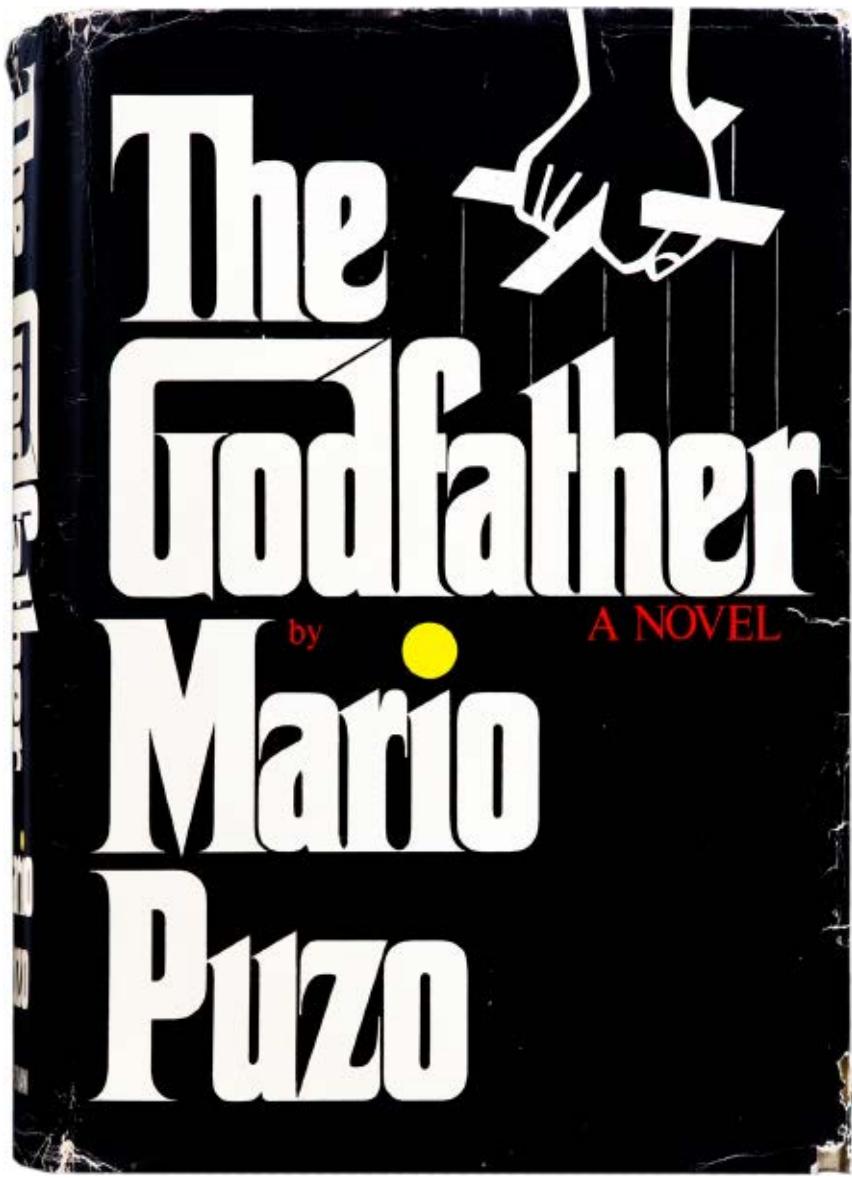
Puzo, Mario

The Godfather
(NY, 1969).

1st edition. Fine in fine dustjacket, a copy of honor, and no comparable copy is for sale, and finer copies are all buried in the end zone of The Meadowlands. **6,000**

"Mama wipe the blood off of my face,
I can't see through it anymore,
I need some one to talk to and a new hiding place,
Feel like I'm looking at Heaven's door..."

—Dylan, Knockin' on Heaven's Door (1975 live lyrics)

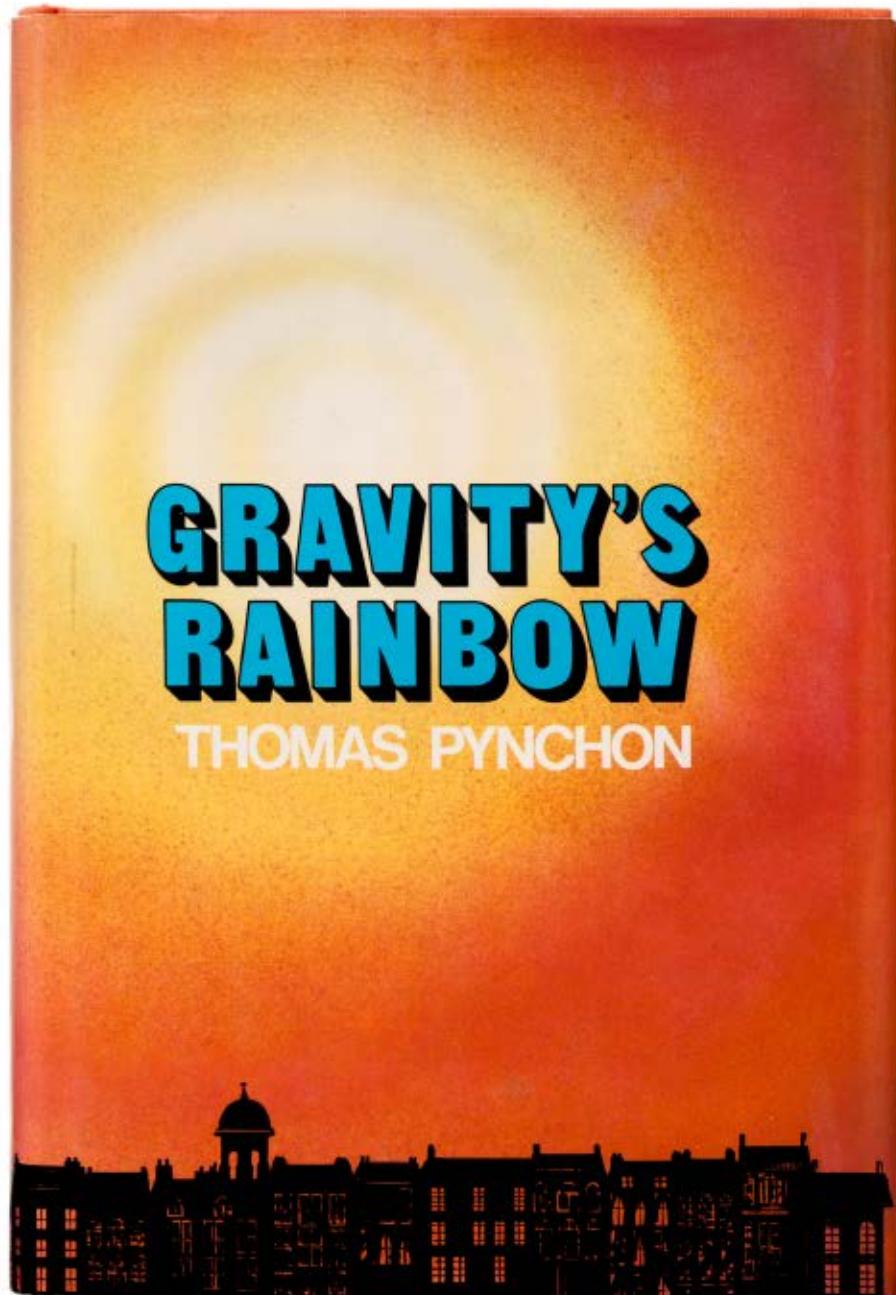


Puzo, Mario

The Godfather
(NY, 1969).

1st edition. Name on endpaper else near fine in a very good jacket with chips, tears, and the nearly inevitable (but rightly reviled) crinkles. The fine to very good price ratio (20–1) demands noticing, and though it may seem suspiciously audacious, it is only half proportionate to the available number of not fine copies versus fine ones (40–1). What that's saying is: There's more to building a library than buying the right book. There's not buying the wrong book for instance (Book Code). 300

Organized crime demanded a piece of the movie action, so the producers gave the Mafia control of the film's toys, with orders to force them on disinterested children.



What am I?

Pynchon, Thomas

Gravity's Rainbow
(NY, 1973).

1st edition. Fine in fine dustjacket. Pynchon is probably the leading, living master of American letters, maybe one day soon a Nobel Laureate, and Gravity's Rainbow is the great novel of the 1970s (and by "great" I only mean P. T. Barnum great), here offered in a fine jacket, for the first time, in a long time, at a fair price. 500

Using Pynchon's status, let's (meaning let's let me) speculate upon "The Great American Novel" (GAN), that invisible specter that haunts American literature, not for my tedious adoration, personal favorite, or ridiculous conclusion, but instead for a quick and dirty reassessment of what has shot down some of the fleeting pretenders.

First, evidence suggests that rarely does a novel get published in any country that can gather a consensus of supremacy. Admittedly, *Don Quixote* is commonly accepted as the great Spanish novel, and it is a novel, (not a poem, or a play, or a collection of stories), but what is the great British novel, or the great French novel, or Italian, Indian, or Chinese, and so on? You say you have a candidate? Others have another. Part of the problem is defining what is a novel? Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are not novels. Nor is Virgil's *Aeneid*. King Arthur is no novel. And *The Mahabharata* isn't either. Got a definition of a novel you like? Ok. Let's talk America, confine it to the U. S. and, as the writer of this essay, I'll pick 10 obvious applicants, and then string them all up on the gallows of broken dreams.

Cooper's *Last of the Mohicans* (1826) is historical romance and was the first American novel extensively translated, sold, read, and acclaimed across Europe. And "first" carries some fundamental weight, and Mohican embodies many of the GAN's other requisites. It's set in 1757, during the French and Indian War, and the historical battles and fictional pursuits that drive its heroic plotline are enhanced with American Indian lore, and graphic descriptions of our now lost wilderness. All that's perfect, but Cooper has been blindsided with so much criticism for his style, as to (unjustly or not) undermine Mohican's scholarly merit, and Americans are still too self-doubting about their literature to face the exertion of defending rapid action as more important than technical excellence.

Hawthorne's *Scarlet Letter* (1850) is also historical romance (elsewhere its type of plot is branded psychological romance), and it's better written than Mohican, in fact brilliantly written, craftsmanship at its finest. It explores sin, alienation, humiliation, spiritual regeneration, guilt, and the search for dignity, in a thorough employment of symbolism and allegory, but Puritan Boston, and its stiff, snoopy subject matter, gives the impression of being too small for a National monument.

Melville's *Moby-Dick* (1851) is symbolic allegory and it is written on so many levels that one or another of them contains just about everything. And nobody (except the degenerately desperate, unable to be noticed for anything other than being insanely contrary) has criticized its literary quality. I guess it isn't the great American novel, but whatever would challenge it had better be better, and nothing better has been, or is likely to be, written. In a way, *Moby-Dick* is the great preventer, dashing the ambitions of those who would apply for the pinnacle.

Let's move on, remembering there are other ways to define the GAN's qualifications. Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852) is set in the years, and orbits the events, leading up to the Civil War, the key fulcrum in America's story. It's a profound document, not the first use of the novel for propaganda, but the most successful, and by many accounts, the only novel that changed history.

That's heavy. An inarguable badge of singularity that may outweigh all others. But this novel is sentimental romance, and not so well written, and there are just too many rough and tumble minded Americans who will never be comfortable with Uncle Tom's tear-jerking squishiness, to say nothing of Stowe's awkward style.

So we come to the inevitable moment in our chronology (because, if you haven't noticed, we have been walking this path chronologically) when we will take a pass on Walden as not a novel (although it is the decoding of America), and pass on Portrait of a Lady (because Henry James is too English for GAN honors), and tug up Twain's Huckleberry Finn (1884). Its plot type is humorous satire, and it showcases Twain's unerring instinct for the American heart. It is great on every plane, transcends formalism, and finds eternal verities, but the obstacle is the ending, utterly in accord with Twain's own premises, yet a digression into literary burlesque. Not the great American novel, but it is, like Moby-Dick, a barrier (Are any of the other hopefults really greater than Moby-Dick or Huck Finn?).

Take a slow breath. Come to the moment. Feel your feet. There is one last 19th century masterpiece. Think about Stephen Crane. Not Maggie (I love Maggie) but rather The Red Badge of Courage (1895), the first American realist novel (more accurately, impressionistic realism) that was beloved by the reading public (I'm sorry, but if the public won't eventually read it, it isn't great). Red Badge is moreover about the Civil War, and set during it (just when the GAN might well be set), and it is a departure from all previous novels of its type, and differs from traditional historical romance by ignoring Generals and victories, and instead probes the personal reactions of unknown foot soldiers, fighting unknown enemies, in battles of indeterminate outcomes, and all of this is filtered through the fear, cowardice, and finally the egotism of the central character, Henry Fleming. It is, in its soul, a psychological portrayal of fear, and that's just not sufficiently broad, for what one should demand from the great American novel.

Now, what about the 20th century? It starts with The Wizard of Oz (1900). A kiddie book you say? Look deeper and note that it follows epic parallels, most precisely Homer's Odyssey. The central figure comes from the heartland (Kansas), travels to a far away place (in this case unwittingly), engages in a dangerous journey home, finds allies (head, heart and body), and overcomes incredible perils and supernatural enemies along the way. And though the heroine is an innocent girl (not a mythic warrior), The Wiz is invention with equivalence at the apex of literature, and it is a novel, and it's as American as enterprise. But its target audience is the American 12 year old, and it's not grown-up enough to satisfy American academia, already insecure about American literary immaturity.

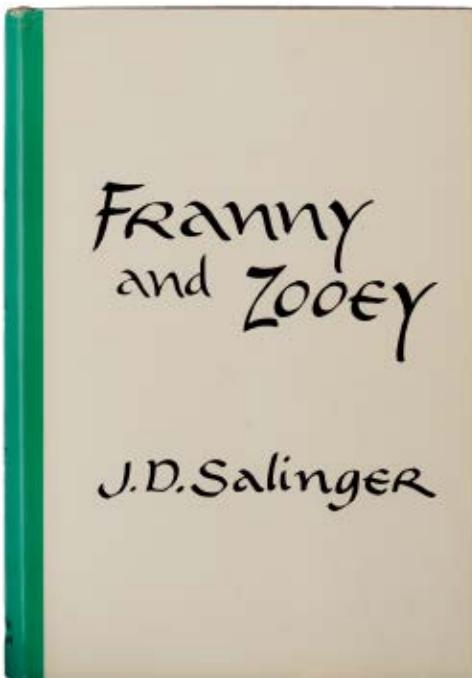
The period between the World Wars seems temporarily ruled by Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby (1925), a novel of social criticism, and a drama in a minor key. I can't say anything new about Gatsby as it's been over analyzed by my lessers and my betters, but I will say 3 things concisely. First, Fitzgerald never intended the character of Gatsby to be a realistic portrayal, but rather half existential (a causeless rebel) and half a romantic hero (somewhat unreal, bogus and absurd).

Despite the sources of his wealth, he stands for hope, idealistic belief, and innocence. He expects more from life than the other characters, who are all, more or less cynical, and he plays the eternal juvenile in a corrupt circle. Second, Fitzgerald pins the Jazz Age, now seen in perspective as the clique who could do nothing individually, but who collectively could decide that nothing can be done, the cocktail party to which you invite everyone you know, to come to your house at 6 PM, drink your bar dry, ridicule your decor, put cigarettes out on your carpet, and leave at 8 PM, to go somewhere more interesting for dinner, without inviting you. Third, and plainly put in 5 words, Gatsby's tragedy is Nick's education. Accordingly, in the end, there is no doubt that Fitzgerald was the prophet of the Jazz Age, but that's where his vision ended. He saw America as full of unrealized promise, calling it, "the moon that never rose." Wrong. It was rising before his eyes. Too wrong for any of his books to be The Great American Novel.

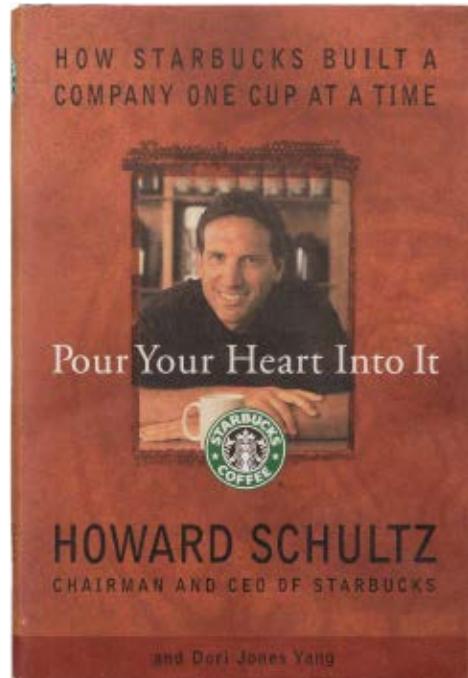
Equally admired, is Mitchell's Gone With the Wind (1936), American literature's Big Mac. She wrote it at the acme of her potential, but her roots were shallow, so she never wrote another. Again, historical romance, and again set during the Civil War, both appropriate. It isn't a happy book, mostly it is deadly serious, and the callous, grasping disillusionment of the leading characters, mocks them, and in the end what remains is only an empty loneliness. Not the GAN, but **Scarlett** archetypically conveys a certain essence of redoubtable American behavior.

And what of the postmodern American novel? Y'know, Mockingbird, and Augie March, Catcher, Atlas, Old Man, Killer Angels, Natural, Godfather, Invisible Man, On the Road, etc. Well, like in The Lion King, we come to the end so as to touch the beginning again and see it anew, and we are going to recall Don Quixote and connect it to (ta da) Gravity's Rainbow. Pynchon's novel is pure metafiction, from the absurdest postmodern school, written by a literary descendant of Herman Melville and James Joyce, and it's set (1945) in the aftermath of World War II (no disqualification there for the profoundness of its setting). No other novel demonstrates such a command of both intellectual artillery, and divergent styles, and they are presented with eloquent verbal fireworks, and its plots (and sub-plots), centered around a rocket, are replete with an overwhelming and disparate range of knowledge. And that's the obstruction. The amorphous storyline is less interesting than the wealth of information that leaks out of it, and though the apparent disorder is actually Pynchon's intentional assault on structure, leading simple-minded hecklers to overlook the depth and power of its critique of contemporary Western culture, it is, after all, a comic novel, just like Don Quixote. But 400 years have passed since Cervantes, and the mood has changed, and while maybe someday, a comic novel may again be seen as a plausible postulant for ultimate prominence, that's someday. But not this day.

So serene reader, what have we done in 4 pages and 1,771 words? Well, I've had some exercise, and we've re-opened the discussion, and I submit that debate itself is the aim, any conclusion is the illusion, and the high water reward is to be found in the personal journeying you can do within your own good mind.



Salinger, J. D.



Franny and Zooey
(Boston, 1961).

1st edition. Fine in fine dustjacket, faintest corner rubs but no wear or fading (see photo). *Franny and Zooey* is a pensive piece of writing, it's a famous book, and this is a blazing copy of it, but right now there are 50 (!) 1st editions in nice jackets for sale, at prices between \$400 and \$1,200, and another 50 that are not so nice, some of them for less. Those 100 books are in hands that span from excellent booksellers to circus folk, but all of them are trying to punch a hole in the sky, because supply has exceeded demand, and bookworld has refused to adjust to reality. Our price is probably the actual value for a fine copy. Or maybe it's worth \$350, or maybe \$50. Call me ignorant, or call me apathetic, but I don't know, and I don't care. 250

for Dr. Blonde

Schultz, Howard

Pour Your Heart Into It
How Starbucks Built a Company One Cup at a Time
(NY, 1997).

1st edition. Fine in fine jacket. **Signed by Schultz (in ink) on the half-title**, not to be confused with the printed (facsimile) signature after the 1 page introduction. 20

This is here for variety. And some things under \$100 should be here, should be recognizable, intriguing, and in the form offered, should not be hilariously common.

Paid ad by Starbucks: Try our individually packaged, take home, instant espresso.



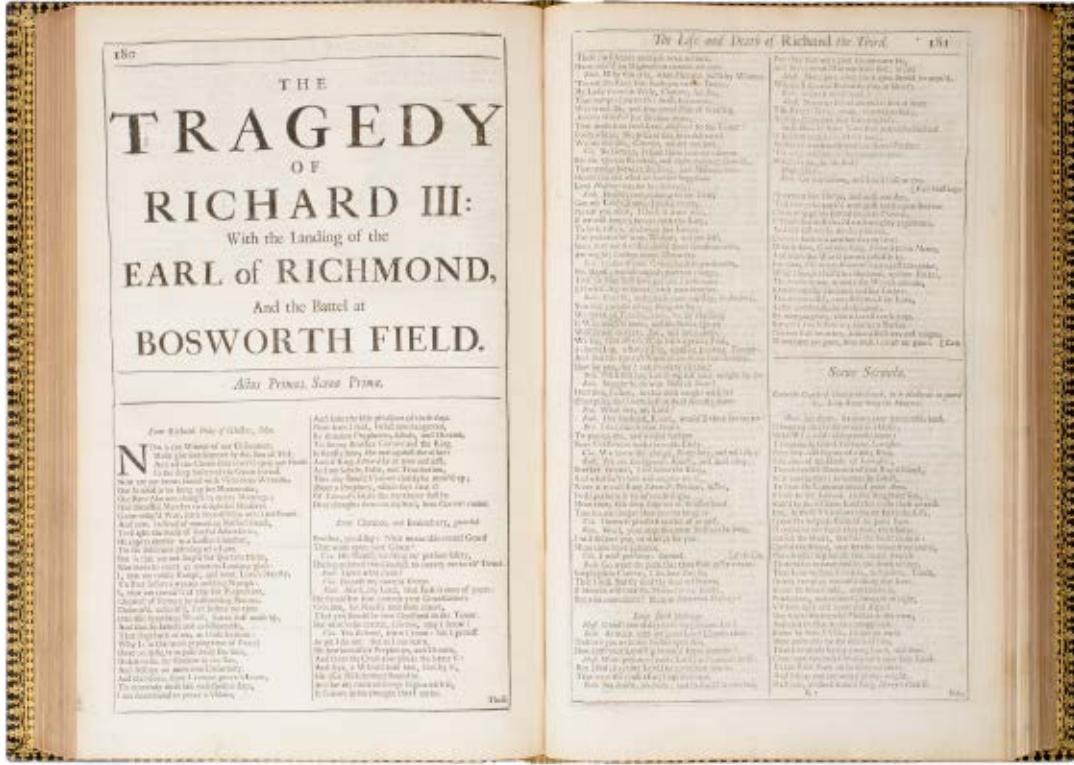
ancient imprinting device

[Seal]

Pictorial **Bronze** Antiquity
(Baktria, ca. 150 B. C.).

Greek seal. Square 35mm. (1 3/8"). 44.34 grams. Flat faced **bronze** artifact (the back looped for carrying) depicting a hump-backed Zebu bull, a leaping gazelle above it, and a fish below it (a design evoking Harappan forms of the Indus valley). A 2,100 year old sculptured hallmark. Fine condition, authentic, original **brown** patina with **iridescent** highlights. Ex-C. N. G. 57. 1,150

Baktria was founded by Persia, with its capital city at the foot of Mt. Paropamisos. Alexander the Great (356–323 B. C.) introduced the Persians to his DEFCON 1, rolled them up, let the sand bury them, settled the kingdom, turned it Greek, and left behind some of his disabled Macedonian veterans and Greek mercenaries to run things when he moved on in 329 B. C. This seal is from the reign of Eukratides (171–135 B. C.) who lead a revolt against his predecessors (Demetrios and Euthydemos II). By 160 B. C. he had disposed of his rivals, and the next 3 decades were the most settled and prosperous in the history of the kingdom, giving rise to a flourishing culture of thought and art, exemplified by, and visible in, this relic.



all the world's a stage

Shakespeare, William

Comedies, Histories and Tragedies
(London, 1685).

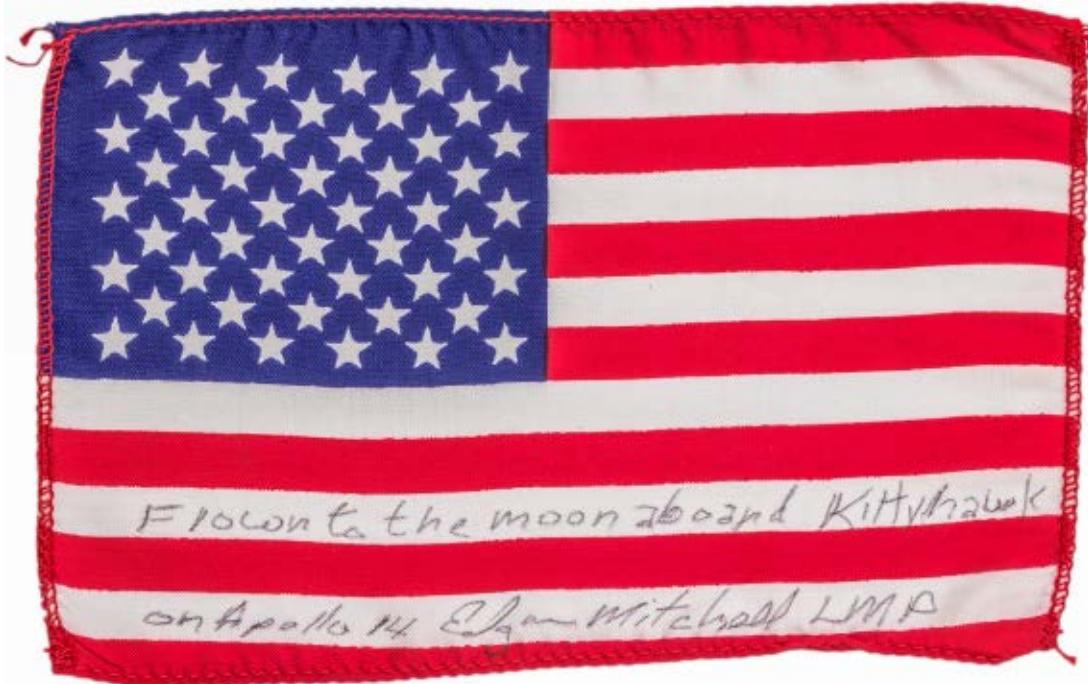
4th folio, 1st issue. All 38 of Shakespeare's plays, the paramount work of art in the whole of English literature. Fine 19th century full blind-tooled morocco, **gilt** titled, **gilt** edges, satisfying condition by any standard, with no repair whatsoever, a nicely executed, gorgeous and distinctive antique (see photograph opposite the title page of this catalog). That said, Shakespeare folios should be valued from the inside out so here's your scrupulously dissected examination without alibis or dismissal: Portrait leaf and title page lightly foxed, minor (small) chips and short tears to some blank margins (and only the blank margins), a dozen tiny pin holes (mostly rust), Ccc6 with the margin ever so slightly miscut by 1/16" at 2 corners imaginably indicative that the leaf was supplied from another genuine copy, but no physical evidence in, or prior description of, this book even hints at it (see the 1901 catalog entry for this book below), stains here and there to 25 or so pages (2 of them on the title page), and a paper flaw just under the upper rule of Ii2, but don't be distracted. This is (withal) a complete and perfect, 328 year old beauty of a folio, tall and wide (14 1/16" X 8 15/16"), and read the next sentence with attention.

Every single letter of text is present and valid, with no facsimile, and (even more remarkably) no (zero) leaves have been remargined or extended and nothing (zero) is missing. The provenance is both dynamic and soothing. Ex-Elizabeth Young, the initial owner, with her ink signature to the title page (a few letters of it rusted). Ex-Thomas Jefferson McKee (bookplate) sold at his auction (Anderson Galleries, NY, April 30, 1901, lot 2602), and despite the petty imperfections we itemized, this copy is plainly, yet truthfully characterized in Anderson's 1901 catalog entry as "A truly magnificent copy. Very tall, clean and entirely perfect." And the McKee library was a spectacular one, featuring rarities that have now become impossibilities (for example, his sale included 529 English quarto plays printed before 1700). And that connects this folio to a strictly applied standard of quality that was higher 112 years ago than it is today, having been selected by a seasoned collector, from among the dozens of 4th folios available to him, to be a part of the greatest American library auctioned up until that time. **180,000**

Collation: O2, A4, A-Y6, Z4, BB-ZZ6, *AAA-DDD6, EEE8, AAA-ZZZ6, AAAA-BBBB6, CCCC2, 458 leaves with the usual mispaginations. References: Greg III 1119. Bartlett 123. Pforzheimer 910. Jaggard 497. Wing S 2915.

A panorama of life, filled with enough heroes for those who favor them, and enough villains for those of the opposite bias. We've been selling these heirlooms for 35 years, and we look at 10 for every 1 we buy, because what are always available are unhappy 4th folios, their common element being descriptions that harken real estate advertising jargon, and drip unwarranted praise. They're usually covered in worn, repaired or rebacked bindings, or worse yet, new bindings, with their veneer of glitter, like some farm girl sculpted from marzipan, and they may be offered at something near our price when made lifelike by morticians in the guise of conservators, or the assembly of 1 complete copy from 2 incomplete ones, and may sell for even less when lost words of text or even full pages have been replaced in facsimile. But you can't make a wit out of 2 half-wits, and a chicken sent traveling does not come back an eagle, so if you want a stalwart folio, that will bring lasting repute and pride of ownership in the most urbane and cultivated of libraries, this is it. Just the fact that every letter is genuine, with no facsimile, sets it above most other copies, and the natural and unrepaired state of each and every margin sets it apart from the rest. This one was deemed to be in loftier condition than its counterparts a century ago, and it's at a price today, that's less than its inferiors, and here are 2 timeless realities about Shakespeare's Comedies, Histories and Tragedies. Unequivocal immortality is a given, and on those unpredictable occasions when copies as fine as this one are offered for sale, the zaniest inversion of inevitability, is to fantasize that the next one you see will be cheaper, as there is a long history reinforcing the idea that the best time to buy them is always last year.

Dragging out the old mantra, one more time, for one last chant: Nobody is offering a finer copy at our price, and nobody is offering an equal copy for less.



way cool

[Space]

**Signed U. S. Flag Flown to the Moon
(1971).**

Silk American flag (4" X 6") carried to the Moon and back aboard Apollo 14. Fine condition (gleaming). **11,000**

This comes with an incontrovertible signed letter of provenance on Apollo stationery. But additionally, and more pointedly (and reassuringly), this flag is titled and signed, in black ink, directly on 2 of its white stripes in the handwriting of Apollo 14 Lunar Module Pilot Edgar Mitchell, "Flown to the Moon Aboard Kitty Hawk on Apollo 14, Edgar Mitchell, LMP" an undetachable authenticity, that is better than letters or certificates which can be shuffled (and shuffled they are), as the majority of these flags when seen (if seen) are glued at the corners to a printed certificate, from which they can be removed and replaced with any flag. Furthermore, left over (or faked up) certificates can have said "any flag" added, but not this one, since the signed stripes are indivisible from the flag, and they affirm exactly what it is, and do so on sight, a nice feature if you want to frame it.

"The central problem of our age is how to act decisively in the absence of certainty." –Bertrand Russell

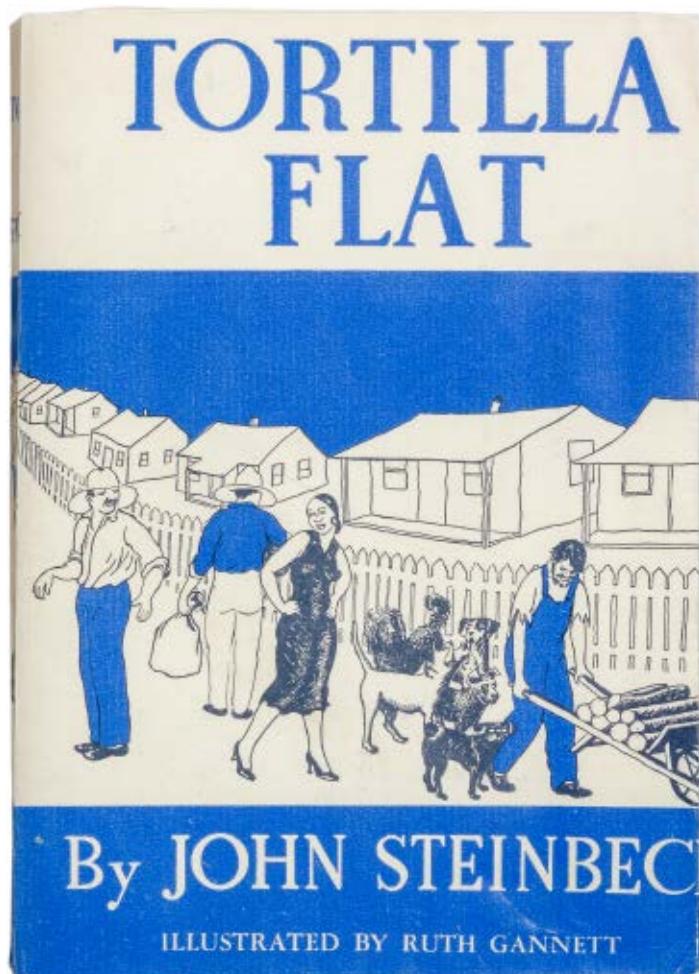
That's what was wonderful about Apollo, bold action in the face of well-founded doubt. And we hail these engineers and astronauts via our inheritance of Thomas Jefferson's America, "a democracy of opportunity, an aristocracy of achievement."

you can't make old friends

Steinbeck, John

Tortilla Flat
(NY, 1935).

1st edition, 1st printing. The Nobel Prize winner's 4th book and first commercial success (the penalty for my success has been to be bored by people who used to snub me). Plain wrappers bound into the pictorial dustjacket, unquestionably the 1st state as well as the 1st binding, though the bibliographical references seem unconvinced (or if you will, unconvincing) whether this is an advance issue of 1st edition sheets, intended exclusively for review and in-house use (most likely), or a partially published issue with some fraction of the 500 actually sold to the public (least likely). What is sure is that there were 4,500 total copies printed. 4,000 of them were hardbound, and only the first 500 of the 4,500 were bound in wrappers and dustjacket. Despite a short crease to the lower corner of the rear flap (a triviality), fine condition, (read once or twice), without any of the usual tanning, soiling or fading (brighter than Elton John's laundry). Not an especially scarce book despite the small printing, but it is scary scarce in this splendid condition. 7,500



Tortilla Flat contrasts the complexities of 20th century (1920s and '30s) civilization with the plainly painted lives in progress of the book's characters who, in an oppression of circumstance, meet together in the house of poor but carefree Danny. The themes feature the idea that a home is no more a house than it is the people who live and meet in it, and Steinbeck doggedly insisted that the meetings were "not unlike the Round Table," a view presented with monumental underemphasis because (for example) in Tortilla Flat, owning 2 houses passes for a kingdom. And Steinbeck must have had an acute case of Maloryitis, because he revisited this metaphor again in many of his later novels.

Price Twenty-five Cents.

Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde

BY
ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

—
NEW-YORK :
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS.
1886.

Authorized Edition.

the real 1st edition

Stevenson, Robert L.

Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde
(NY, 1886).

1st edition of the wraith within, preceding the London edition (and this American edition is scarcer too). Original wrappers, spine faded, thin chips at edges, still very

good, with no nasty shortcomings, superior condition for this 1st edition. 7,000

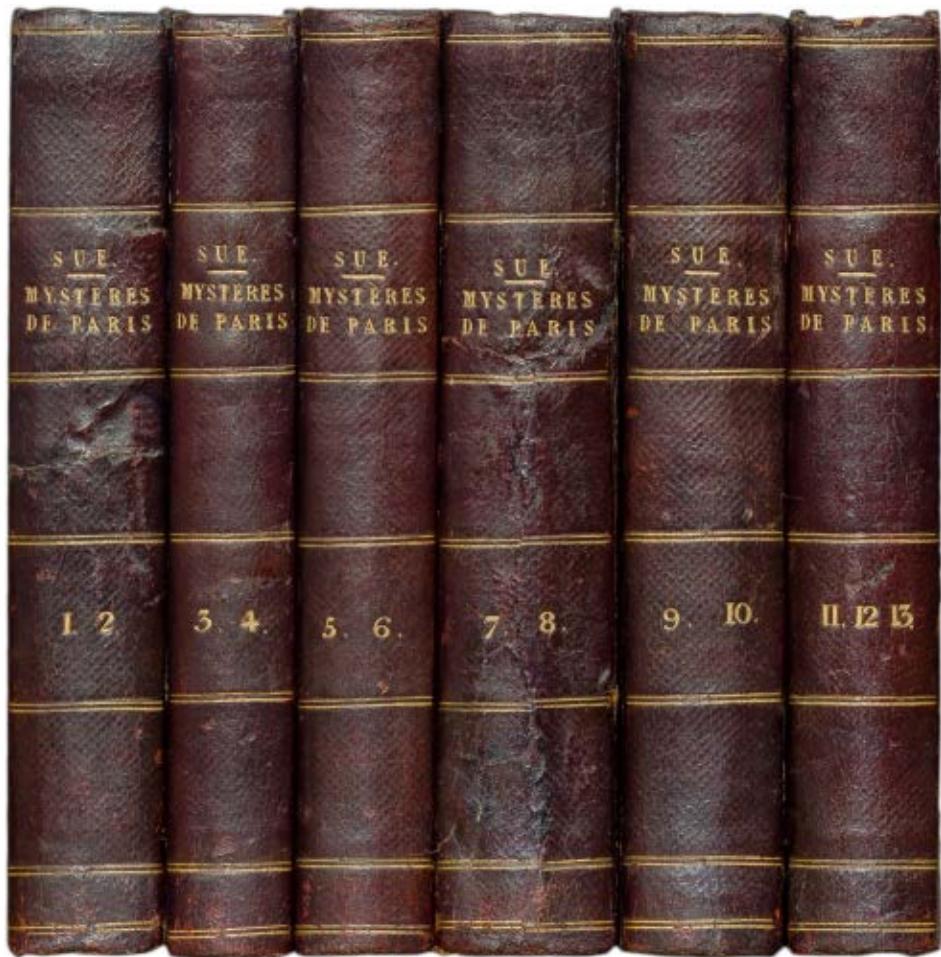
It isn't news, and it may be tiresome but recall, if you will, that Jekyll and Hyde was an alarming invention, preceding Freud's analysis of split personality by 15 years, and relaunching science fiction into new themes based on invention that wasn't necessarily related to machines, and all of this has been thoroughly analyzed. Less thoroughly analyzed is the bibliography, but all it cries out for (and softly so) is a footnote, merely clarification. Accordingly, here is your 1 long ride to nowhere per catalog, on the bibliographical hamster wheel. First specifically. Then generally. Specifically: Well known is that this NY edition precedes the London edition by 4 days, that 4,200 total copies were printed, and that they were issued in both dark green cloth and printed paper wrappers, with no priority, but (for what it's worth) the 2 pre-publication copies (seemingly sample copies or review copies) that I have seen, were in wrappers. The references verify that, to begin with, 1,200 of the 4,200 were bound in cloth, and the remaining 3,000 were bound in wrappers. What is also well known (and what I'll gratuitously dissect), is that sales of 1st editions in wrappers trailed sales of 1st editions in cloth, so when the 1,200 in cloth had all been sold (and rather quickly sold), something like 750 of the remaining unsold copies in wrappers were stripped of their paper covers and rebound in the same *green* cloth as the first hardbound copies, a stockpile to fill orders pending a 2nd edition. This diminished the total number of wrapped copies from 3,000 to perhaps 2,250. It is easy to distinguish the otherwise identical 1st cloth binding from the 2nd cloth binding using a ruler. The 1st binding measures 7 7/16" tall, while the 2nd measures 7 5/16" tall. This happened because copies in wrappers, initially trimmed to the same size as those in cloth, were trimmed again at the time they were repurposed, so the finished product was 1/8" shorter. And how does this impact a copy like ours in wrappers? It partially explains its relative scarcity. Further, 19th century books produced in America, and issued in both cloth and wrappers, often show survival rates of 10 in cloth for every 1 in wrappers, even when more copies were published in wrappers than in cloth, a consequence of sturdiness (wraps are flimsy), but also a consequence of price. Cloth copies were more expensive, and more often went into the hands of readers with more elevated libraries, where they were preserved in less hostile environments, and wrapped copies were more often the binding of choice for those whose intention was to rebind their book in leather. Assuming that the 2 cloth bindings accounted for a total of 1,950 copies, that leaves 2,250 in wraps, and my casual study suggests that NY Jekyll and Hyde 1st editions in wrappers are today, at least, 5 times scarcer than those in cloth. And most copies in wrappers are either in poor condition (they look like they're from the library of the Blair Witch), or they're repaired (zombie books), or they're too expensive (a bad weather flight on Buddy Holly Airlines). Ours is a nice one (I'd call it exceptional). It's unrestored, and here priced with some compassion, partly from a scan of the general economy, which suggests that when the buzzards are fighting over an abandoned tire, these are still hard times.

That was specific. Now generally: The most inflexible foe of truth isn't lies, but

conviction, so new bibliographical proposals should be heard, and not immediately scorned in suspicion, as at their best, new ideas are often the result of evidence compiled from long, and hopefully critical research, though at their worst, they may be fog spread to serve an immediate, immoral objective. Be smart, the fish sandwich at Sea World is made from slow learners, and anyway, assertions without proof can be rejected without proof, so consider the source, be wary if both sides are not presented coherently, and then trust your own common sense. Sometimes that newness is just an addition, a postscript, to what is already accepted (like here with Jekyll and Hyde). Other times it is a quest for clarity through uncomplicatedness, an elimination of mistaken or superfluous facts that do not apply to an outcome, or that are in conflict with those facts that are essential and irrefutable. Or it can be a reconfiguration, or reprioritization of already extent facts, aiming at plainness, intelligibility, or precision. And sometimes it's a heretofore undrawn resolution from previously accredited information. But there are occasions when it involves a complete or partial reversal, negating the accepted judgments, either passively (a revelation of mistakes) or actively (a presentation of conflicting data). Whichever is the case, all can lead to a more honorable and trustworthy point of reference and presentation, and the righteous position, even if that position is unexpected.

As to our bibliographical conclusions, they are all given as "pending new discovery" much in the same way that liberty is given as "pending good behavior." What is lazy (but tolerable) in bookselling is to cite selected references, and sell the book that conforms, while ignoring obvious inconsistencies with that unbreachable repose of indifference. What is bad in bookselling is the devious misuse of terms, such as substituting "2nd state" for "2nd printing" and when those bad booksellers go broke, they won't leave a void because Twinkies are already back on the shelves. Sometimes you can intuit that said selected references are wrong, or incomplete, and going to change, before you know unerringly what aspects of them will be abandoned, or what will become the new right. My own experience is that a bibliographical discovery is hardly ever accompanied by the word "eureka" but more often by the phrase "hmmm, that's funny." So when analyzing any book, disassemble it bibliographically, explore the pieces, and then try to put yourself in the shoes of the publisher, and walk yourself through the production process. And once you've gathered, ordered, and weighed any new data, apply Lex parsimoniae (Occam's razor), a warning not to overlook the obvious (keep your eye on the doughnut, rather than the hole), not to increase, beyond what is pertinent, the entities an explanation requires, and finally, that among competing hypotheses, lean towards (start with) the one that makes the fewest assumptions, meaning that when you hear hoof beats, think of horses, not unicorns (Book Code).

Lastly: The superficial differences between being a great bookseller, and successfully posing as a great bookseller are practically negligible, but I have my aspirations, so what I do is see if some new view fits the physical facts, and does so simply, and if it does, I suggest it in word, circulate it among my peers, and then I propose it in print, and if it stands, I change my mind. Like all rational people.



the first modern super-hero

Sue, Eugene

Les Mystères De Paris
[The Mysteries of Paris]
(Brussels [Hauman], 1842–1843).

13 vols. in 6. 1st edition (in French), likely preceding Gosselin's 1st Paris edition, and the Brussels edition of Jamar (similar dates), and definitely preceding those of Lebègue, Meline, and Muquardt (all of which either begin after 1842, or end after 1843). Contemporary half calf, no half-titles, but with the 6 page Rédacteur at the end, repairs to spines and joints, name on endpapers, lightly foxed, else very good, and scarce. Originally serialized in *Journal des Débats* (June, 1842–Oct. 1843), our edition issued sequentially, 1 volume at a time, about every 6 weeks (vols. 1–4, 1842, vols. 5–13, 1843), as soon as enough of the novel had been published in the journal to make up a small volume's obligatory number of chapters. **1,500**

A novel of gigantic invention, a crime thriller (the earliest developed to this level), the harbinger of all noir, the most successful picaresque tale of its day, nearly the first detective novel, and among the first uses of the novel for propaganda, causing

such an uproar that it forced the government establishment to address legislation directed at the plight of the poor. And it was the birthplace of our 20th century super-hero. Listen-up. The historic prototype is Rodolphe, Prince of Gerolstein (a 19th century Batman, though the Robin role is divided between Sir Walter, an Englishman, and David an accomplished black doctor who used to be a slave). Disguised as a painter of fans (the costume), Rodolphe roams the nighttime neighborhoods of squalor adjoining Notre Dame on a moral crusade (the driving purpose), among those who find it inconvenient to be poor (the defended). He solves crimes (the action), protects the worthy (the belief), bares social injustices (the deed), represents the forces of good (the judgment), and fights with his immense physical strength, wealth, and intelligence (the powers), against such neo-Gothic villains as a serial killer with a mutilated face, and a monstrous whore-mistress (when the mice start throwing themselves on the traps, it means your whore-mistress is coming for a visit). The belle heroine (Fleur-de-Marie) is struggling to stay alive on the streets among rogues, thieves, requins, demimondes, and criminals. In a spectacular climax, after a surfeit of adventures, Rodolphe saves her from the evil notary (lawyer) Jacques Ferrand, and when her true identity is finally uncovered, she turns out to be Rodolphe's long-lost daughter. And catch this review:

"Rodolphe...traverses the world to separate the good from evil...in order to punish the latter, and reward the former. The representation of good and evil has stamped itself so deeply in his...brain that he believes in the physical existence of Satan, and would like to catch him alive. On the other hand, he tries to reproduce on a small scale the devil's antithesis, God."

— Karl Marx (yah, him), *The Holy Family* (1845)

Mysteries of Paris was the sensation of its time throughout Europe and in America, only superseded in popularity by Dumas' *The Count of Monte-Cristo* (serialized in the same journal a year later). Sue's innovation influenced authors, and their novels, across the West, but among those most obviously and directly inspired was Victor Hugo, who turned that inspiration into *Les Misérables*. And for those upon whom influence and inspiration were not sufficient, there was imitation, and *The Mysteries of Paris* was imitated everywhere, creating a wave of best-selling books exploring the secrets of metropolises. In America, Poe was floored by it. He admitted to enjoying its tense, dramatic situations (and advancement of his *Murders in the Rue Morgue*), then (with the sound of axes grinding), he called the writing, a confusing "paradox of childish folly and consummate skill." And it's still in print for you to read.

After this book Sue became The Suerantula, and for the next 14 years he was the Continent's second highest-paid novelist (at 100,000 francs a book), a thunder-punching literary media star, greeted as the chief alternative to Alexandre Dumas (considered to be a royalist storyteller). But Dumas still had the larger income, earning roughly 200,000 francs annually, and this sum at a time when an industrious laborer earned about 700 francs a year.



Sturz, Sheppard &c.

Captain Lemuel Gulliver, of
Redriff A. A. t. suæ 58.

with the frontispiece portrait in the 1st state

Swift, Jonathan

Gulliver's Travels
(London, 1726).

2 vols. 1st edition, 1st printing, Terrink's A (Terrink's AA and B are reprints), with the 1st state portrait frontispiece (no lettering around the oval frame), and only the first 50 sets off the press had the portrait in the 1st state (50 of the slightly later large paper copies, hereafter abbreviated "l.p." also had the 1st state portrait, but copies of our regular paper issue, hereafter called "trade" not only precede it, but are rarer. See paragraph 2 right after "Reference" for corroboration of this priority). Lush 19th century full green morocco (levant), gilt inner dentelles, edges gilt, signed in gilt by Wallis, spines faded, 2 inner blank margins indiscernibly strengthened at the time of binding, else fine condition, a tall, clean, extraordinary copy, with all the divine beauty of differential calculus, and it's a complete one with every map, plate and plan. Bound in at the back of vol. I is a key to the roman à clef (the anagrams used in the Lilliputian debates). No slipcase or box, and none seems needed, as our set is stately, fulfilling, and all quality, compared to indifferent sets with less life than a fried shrimp, but surrounded by a fancy slipcase, much in the same way that honeysuckle is planted around an outhouse. A highborn 1st edition, 25 times as rare as one of the later pretenders with the 2nd state portrait for twice the price, and when books are 25 times as rare for twice the price, it confirms that the bargains remain at the top of a highly inefficient book market, just don't believe that such inefficiency will always be the norm, or that such books will always be available. And here's a clear and unambiguous axiom that you can file under "Book Code." The best copies of the greatest novels don't always go up in value the fastest, but that's the way to invest. Reference: Terrink, 289. Grolier/English, 42. Rothschild, 2104–6. Printing and the Mind of Man, 185. **160,000**

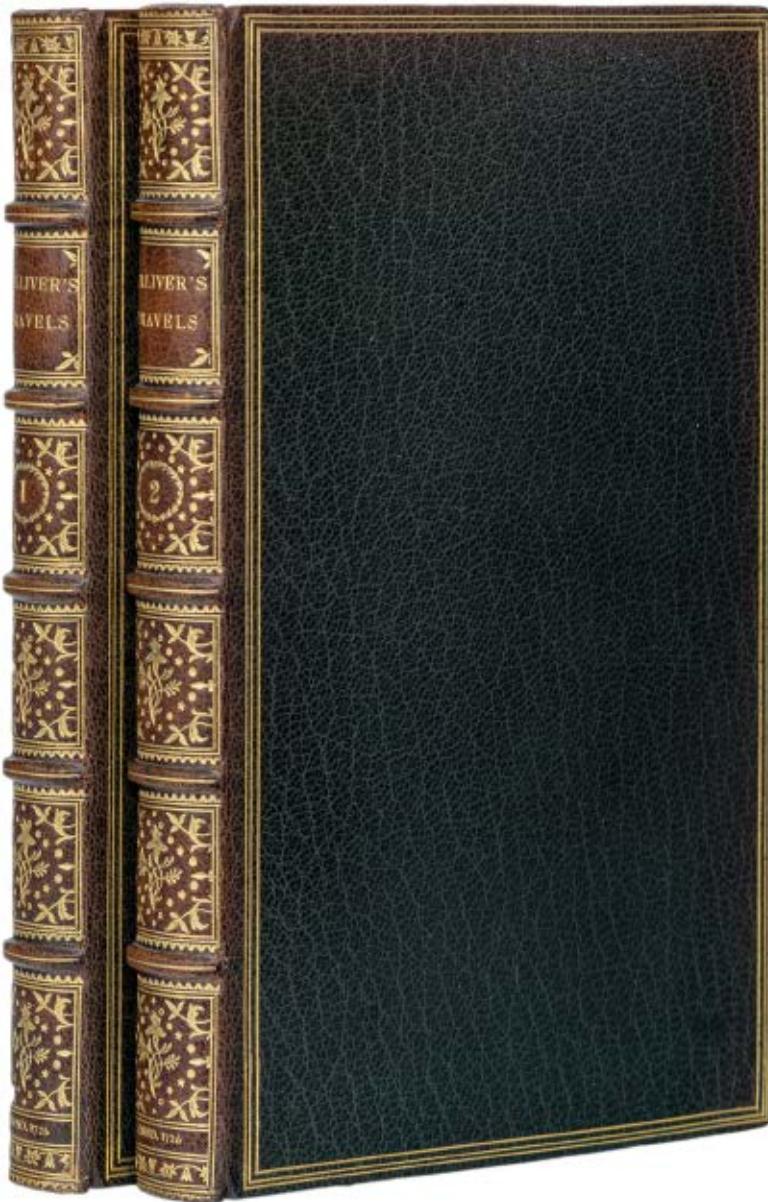
Accepted without argument is that all copies (trade or l.p.) with the 1st state portrait were produced (printed) prior to all the copies with the 2nd state portrait. Addressing the priority of our trade issue with the 1st state portrait, versus the l.p. issue with the 1st state portrait, Rothschild (2105) states, "the large paper copies were probably issued later than those on ordinary paper..." His use of the word "probably" can be discounted as the false gentility of antiquarian caution, since all the physical evidence is one-sided. The issue window is tight because publication was Oct. 28, and all copies were sold out within a week but many typesetting changes between the 2 issues are obvious and unmask their sequence. For just 1 example, E8 in vol. II has the catchword corrected in both our trade issue and the l.p. issue, but in our trade issue it is a cancel whereas in the l.p. issue the correction was made in the press, so the leaf is integral. This same point serves to identify our trade issue as the 1st binding, since a cancel (like in our copy) is necessary to replace a leaf only when the sheets are already bound (or at least sewn). The correction in the l.p. copies could, imaginably,

have been made in 2 ways, either before it was printed (likely), or if already printed but unbound, by reprinting signature E and then replacing the entire signature in the stacked but unbound sheets (less likely). Nonetheless, whichever way it was done, the sequence between the 2 issues remains the same, and there are other analogous points that inarguably point to the same conclusion.

Every era is a dying dream, and the spirit of the age is the very thing that's changed by a great man. Lemuel Gulliver is a decent sort, hopeful, simple, direct and filled with goodwill, a literal minded scientist, sea captain, traveler, and doctor, a lover of detail, an alert observer, a deceptively matter-of-fact reporter, and like Crusoe before him, encouragingly resourceful, exactly the qualities admired by an 18th century audience (hey, I admire him). So, in the end, when he becomes an embittered misanthrope, hating the world and turning against everyone, the question is, why? The answer is that the edified are involved without being attached, and Jonathan Swift was not Lemuel Gulliver. The author liked individual man amply, but he was doubtful about humanity, angry at many academic institutions, and caustic about the Whig government, and it was not his intention that the character of Gulliver be heroic. Swift didn't believe in depending on progress, the inevitable perfectibility of man, or the panacea promised by knowledge gained through reason and logic. But to deride the bourgeois is bourgeois, so he despised himself, yet esteemed himself as a self-despiser (all hate is self hate), and it was Gulliver who became his weapon (host and parasite) against the transition from the age of reason to the age of enlightenment, contrived to demonstrate the weaknesses permeating enlightenment's values, as well as its fast denial of the intensity of that which is irrational in man.

Gulliver is the second oldest novel in English (after Robinson Crusoe, 1719) that is still being commonly read for entertainment, the only faithful and impartial test of a novel's classic stature. Swift wrote it as a satire with a plotline packed tighter than a ballpark sausage, but there was a byproduct (pun), a remaking of fiction, educating Harold Pinter's query: "Apart from the known and the unknown, what else is there?" What's not fiction is that few 18th century novels are still widely read for diversion, so analysis is easy. Defoe's Crusoe, Swift's Gulliver, Fielding's Tom Jones and Voltaire's Candide come quickly to mind, but after those 4, there is no consensus. Leland's Longsword is the first (or the seed for the first) historical romance, Walpole's Castle of Otranto (Printing and the Mind of Man, 211) is generally anointed as the first gothic, and Lewis' Monk is the first horror novel incorporating the supernatural, but after the devoted, nobody reads them anymore. Laclos' Dangerous Liaisons is still a tense exercise if you can muster the fortitude to read any novel fashioned as a series of letters, but former models like Goldsmith's Vicar of Wakefield, Sterne's Tristram Shandy or Richardson's Pamela, are decomposing rapidly, and sliding off the edge of the modern reader's radar. So, it's the same old story (truth often is the same old story). When a novel, like Gulliver's Travels, remains immortal for 287 years, it must be seen as a feat unlikely to be duplicated by many books from the 20th (or

21st) century, even though modern novelists have the marked advantage of being able to stand on the shoulders of, not only, the 18th century giants (Defoe, Swift, Fielding and Voltaire), but also the 19th century like of Austen, Scott, Hugo, Dickens, Dumas, Bronte, Melville, Eliot, Carroll, Tolstoy, Twain, and Dostoyevsky.



Accordingly, better books should be more plentiful, and easier to write, but read that to yourself quietly, as whoever is in charge of irony may be listening.

"Satire is a...glass wherein beholders do generally discover everybody's face but their own."

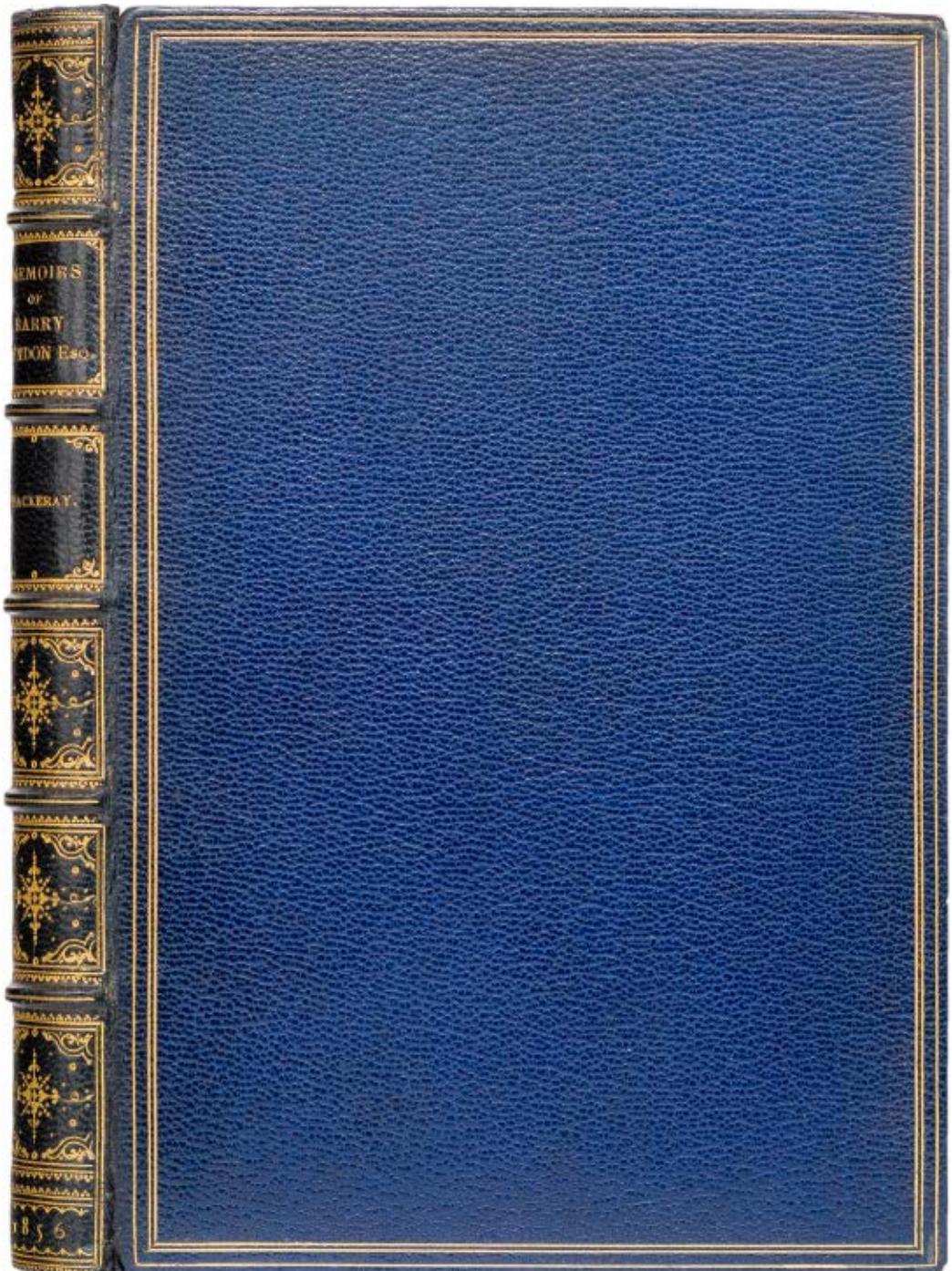
—Jonathan Swift

This book has it all, quality, significance, rarity, and beauty, and these are the 4 pillars of all antiques, though each breed (kind) of antique prioritizes the 4 in a different order. For books it starts with significance, since perfect 1st editions of unwanted books are worthless, raising the question, how should you estimate unwanted books? Or maybe I mean why?

And speaking of me. My ambition is to write wise and noble things, but in the meantime I am content to write about wise and noble books, and to write my small things about them, as if somehow (by proximity) what I was writing was wise and noble.

"I am he, as you are he, as you are me, and we are all together."

—Lennon/McCartney, I Am the Walrus



Thackeray, William M.

The Memoirs of Barry Lyndon
(London, 1856).

1st English edition. Full 19th century morocco, signed by Zaehnsdorf, original front wrapper bound in, 1 page of ads at the end (as issued). Near fine. The title page conforms to the bibliography with "The right of Translation is reserved" at the

bottom, 1 of 2 states with no priority, but (candor alert) the title page without this note is scarcer. The bibliographer (Van Duzer) says, "There are a few copies without the words." I'm thinking the title page without the words is an earlier state, but I don't think it's an earlier issue, as both were sold on publication day, though maybe in different places. No copy of this London, 1856 edition is listed in the auction records for the past 35 years, surely a red herring (Barry Lyndon is scarce, but it can't be that scarce). As for original wrappers, I've never seen a copy in wrappers, and neither did Van Duzer, whose collection had one like ours, rebound with the wrapper bound in (his copy 7 1/4" tall, ours 1/16" taller). 2,500

Thackeray spins a darkly plotted coming of age novel, a picaresque satire that's harder than braided steel and more athletic than a verb. Barry is a lucky grifter, a rogue, gambler, and bounder, handsome and fearless, yet violently flawed. He benefits from the most favorable of circumstances, but is ultimately overcome, because he burdens his good fortune, with more personal baggage than Mariah Carey on safari. Thackeray's minor theme is that the chief advantage of being born into society is that one can see what a tawdry public play it is. His major theme is that villainy is revealed through self-justification. Narrated by Barry himself, chapter 1 opens with the line, "Since the days of Adam, there has been hardly a mischief done in this world but a woman is at the bottom of it" and that is only the first of many rationalizations, portending a fatal version of hubris. The novel was originally serialized in Fraser's Magazine (1844) as The Luck of Barry Lyndon (luck is when God chooses to interfere anonymously), but it wasn't immediately issued as a book while Thackeray pondered various aspects of the criticism that blewback on him from reader's discomfort with, and resentment at, this particular incarnation of a "lucky" anti-hero (empty trucks make the loudest noise). He tinkered around the flanks trying to validate the realism he had achieved, without ever feeling right about it, so he tossed it aside like a single sock, and in the end, just hoped Barry would be forgotten and disappear into the landfill of history. But in 1853, the NY publisher Appleton, tired of waiting for Thackeray's revised adaptation, and unconstrained (and unapologetic) in a time of copyright anarchy, decided to publish the text from Fraser's magazine serialization as a book. This awakened the author, so in 1856, he revised (softened) the text imperceptibly, and then Thackeray had an epiphany. He replaced "Luck" in the title with "Memoirs," patted himself on the back for handling the matter so cleverly, and had an undersized printing of this London edition published by Bradbury & Evans.

As time passed, allowing some generational dispassion, the novel's reputation grew. In 1975 Kubrick's motion picture of it was released, and immediately reaped wide acclaim as a moviemaking amazement, and specific acclaim as the single greatest feat of lighting in the history of cinema, with an impact on illumination greater than the impact of the Pakistani Intelligence Service on American naïveté. Now it's out on Blu-ray, and well worth a Netflix download, if you're up for a transfixing adventure of fallen vanity, and don't mind being hypnotized, by real art, for 3 hours.

we do not seek, but we find

Primarily we buy and sell reads, but we also buy and sell closely associated items that are printed, minted, painted, stamped, drawn, written, engraved, embossed, annotated, autographed, mimeographed, photographed, lithographed, etc. I don't know how the A. B. A. A. feels about us selling coins (I defend these objects as, after all, a form of imprinting), but it's just my initiative, no path to the future, no inspired prescience, no attempt at leadership, no harbinger of things to come, and no new wave that will dominate our books. I'm just throwing change of pace at my readers so they don't get bored, not taking myself too seriously, and adopting "why not?" as a premise for life whenever I can. And I recall the words of Michael Jordan who said, "You're never bigger than the game." So I'm not mocking the association, and on the contrary I support it, and defer to its aims, both spiritually and intellectually, so much so that I suggest, that any member of it, who is willing to tattoo the A. B. A. A. logo on any part of his or her body, should be subsidized to do so, and the inking fully paid for by the association.



[Venetian Coinage]

Silver Grosso
(Venice [Venezia], 1252–1268).

Pre-Renaissance Italian coin ca. 1253, struck for Reniero Zeno (Renieri Zen), Doge of Venice, the last Doge to rule without surveillance (after Zeno, the Doge had to wait for other officials to be present before opening any dispatches from foreign powers). Fine condition (grades “Extremely Fine”) with light iridescent toning, breathtaking for this medieval silver. 20mm. 2.16 grams. Obverse: Saint Marko (St. Mark) and Zeno standing facing forward, holding a banner between them. Reverse: Christ, seated on a throne facing forward, wearing nimbus crown, pallium, and colobium, barred IC XC across field. Ex-CNG 88, lot 1927, \$517.50 (all in). Ref: Papadopoli, 1. Paolucci, 1. CNI VII, 1. Biaggi, 2775. **650**

The Venetian grosso (composed of 98.5% silver) was first introduced in 1193. Grosso means big or wide, and the coin was a larger, thinner take on the original Roman denarius, at about half the weight (inflation). Other 750 year old, examples certainly survive, they’re just not often the coins of Zeno, or in such elite condition.



Washington, George

Copper Penny
(Soho, Birmingham, ca. 1820).

American 1 cent. Fine condition (grades “Very Fine 30”), glossy chocolate brown, minor surface scratches, else smooth and attractive. 18.5mm. 7.44 grams. Obverse: Laureate bust of George Washington dressed in military finery, “Washington Independence” around. Reverse: Seated figure, “United States” above, engraver’s initials, “T. W. I.” (Thomas W. Ingram) below, “E. S.” opposite. Dated “1783” (commemorating the Treaty of Paris that ended the Revolutionary War). Reference: Breen, 1203. Crosby, Pl. X, 1. Baker, 4. **350**

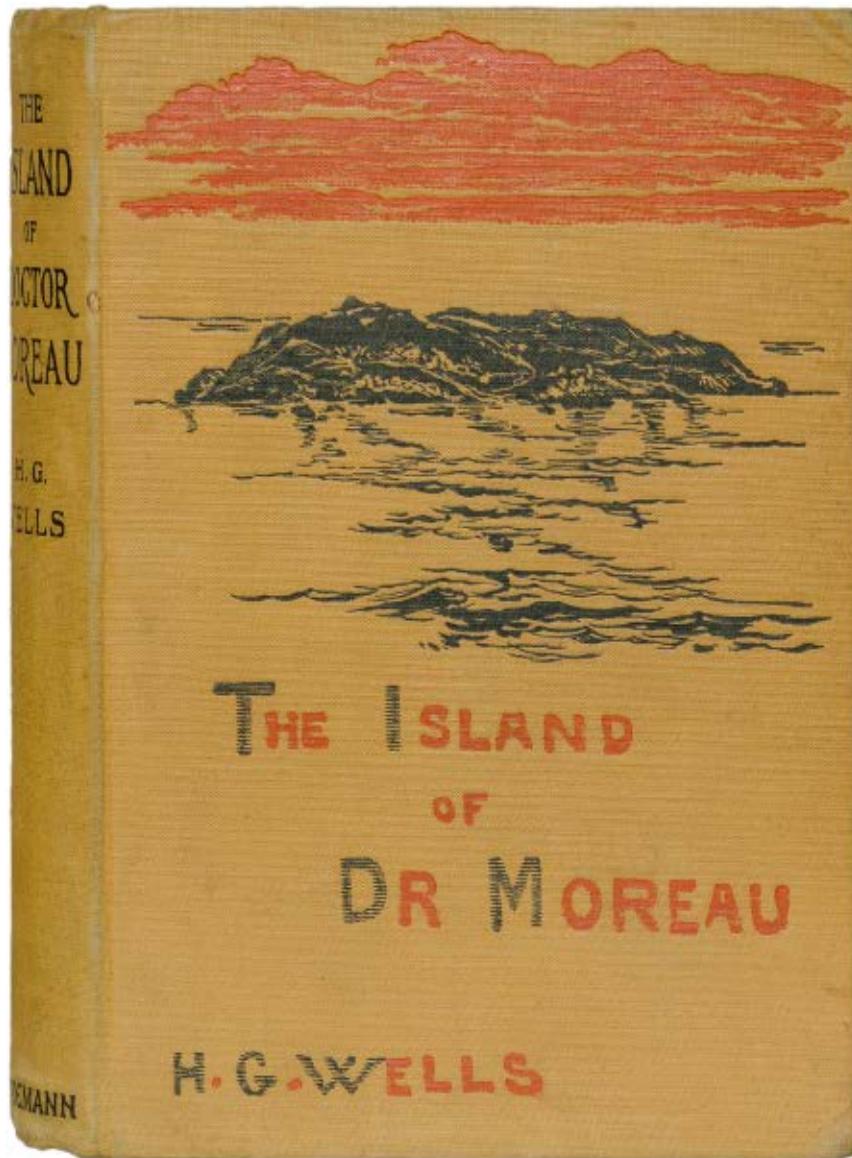


[Weller, Peter]

Robocop
(1987).

Original 1-sheet (27" X 41") of the Orion Pictures film starring Peter Weller, signed, "Peter Weller Robo" in silver ink. Folds as issued else fine condition. 100

In his sundry and ambidextrous callings, Dr. Weller is the 21st century's foremost poly-occupational Renaissance man. In Hollywood more director than actor these days (Sons of Anarchy, Monk, Longmire, House, Hawaii Five-O, etc.) but he'll take an occasional turn facing the camera (most recently as Admiral Marcus in Star Trek Into Darkness), all of this with his left hand, while his right attends to academia as historian, art scholar, author, narrator, university professor, Latinist, and antiquary. Not so unlike the rest of us, but his intellect flies higher on the wings of perseverance.

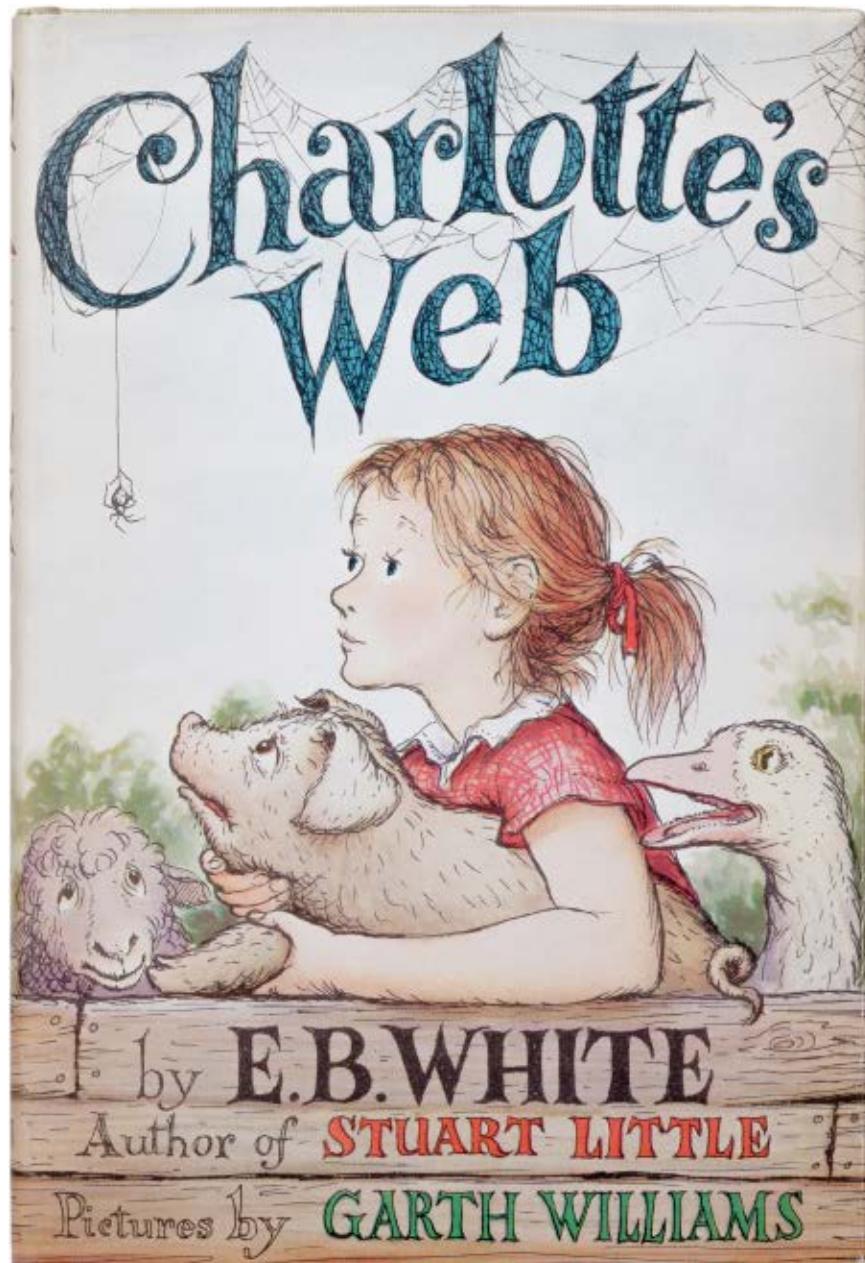


no man is an island, but it's better than being a houseguest

Wells, H. G.

The Island of Dr. Moreau
(London, 1896).

1st edition, 1st binding (tan cloth, etc.) with correct ads (as per Currey), and likely identifying the 1st issue, matching the deposit copy in the British Library, however (full disclosure) though this is the usual binding, there is a seldom seen grass green cloth binding with an elaborately gilt spine having alternating rows of intertwined "HGW" monograms and Tudor roses that may precede it. Pinhead sized spot of wear to front hinge, but very good (nice for this book). Wells' second major novel, a rotated revisiting of the Frankenstein theme, haunting, primitive, and gripping, a 219-page lockup in The House of Shock. 1,500



White, E. B.

Charlotte's Web
(NY, 1952).

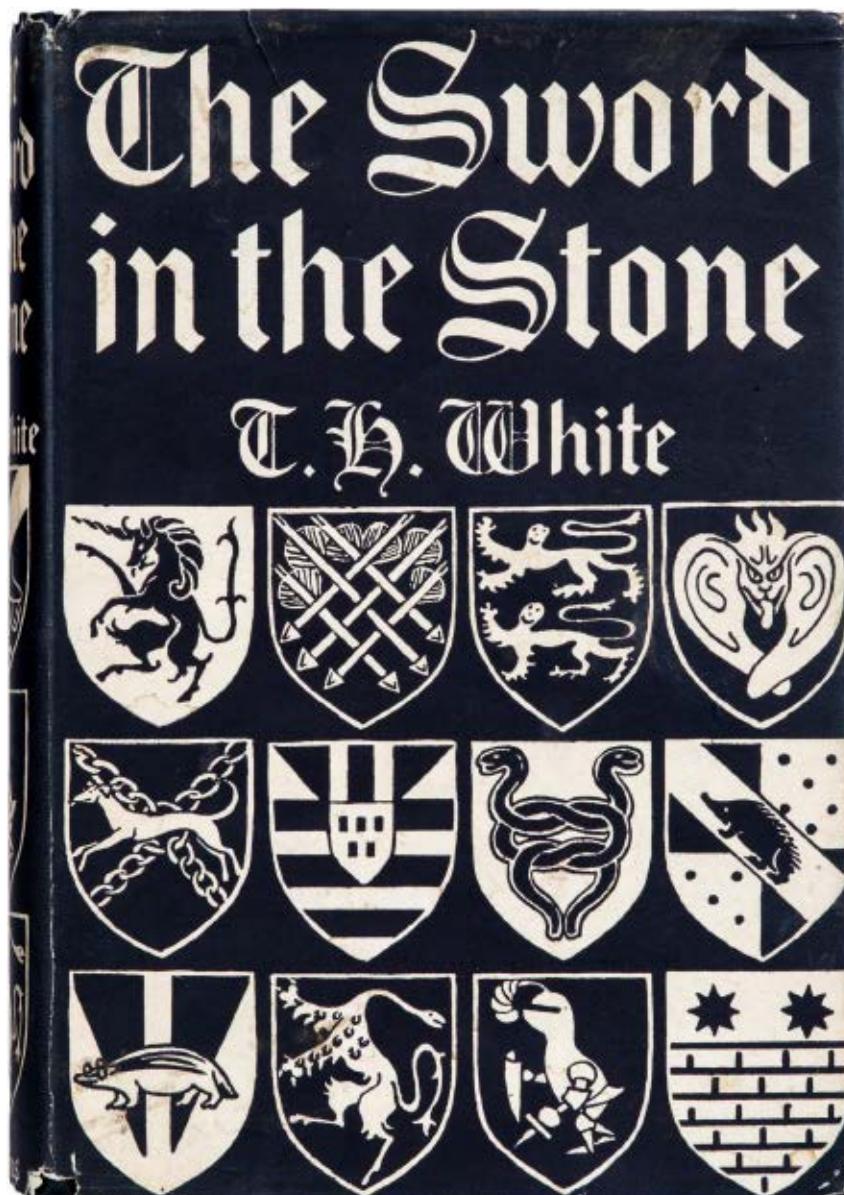
1st edition. Some book. Radiant. Terrific. Humble. Fine in fine jacket (faultless). Inside every ruined book is a fine book wondering, what the hell happened? Setting aside the brief and simple, and thus easier to perfect (like *The Pokey Little Puppy*), Charlotte seems the sovereign postmodern children's book, and for good reason. It's an unassuming tale of companionship, a talking animal take on goodwill that carries the most modest and warmest of messages. Friendship. **4,000**

White, T. H.

The Sword in the Stone
(London, 1938).

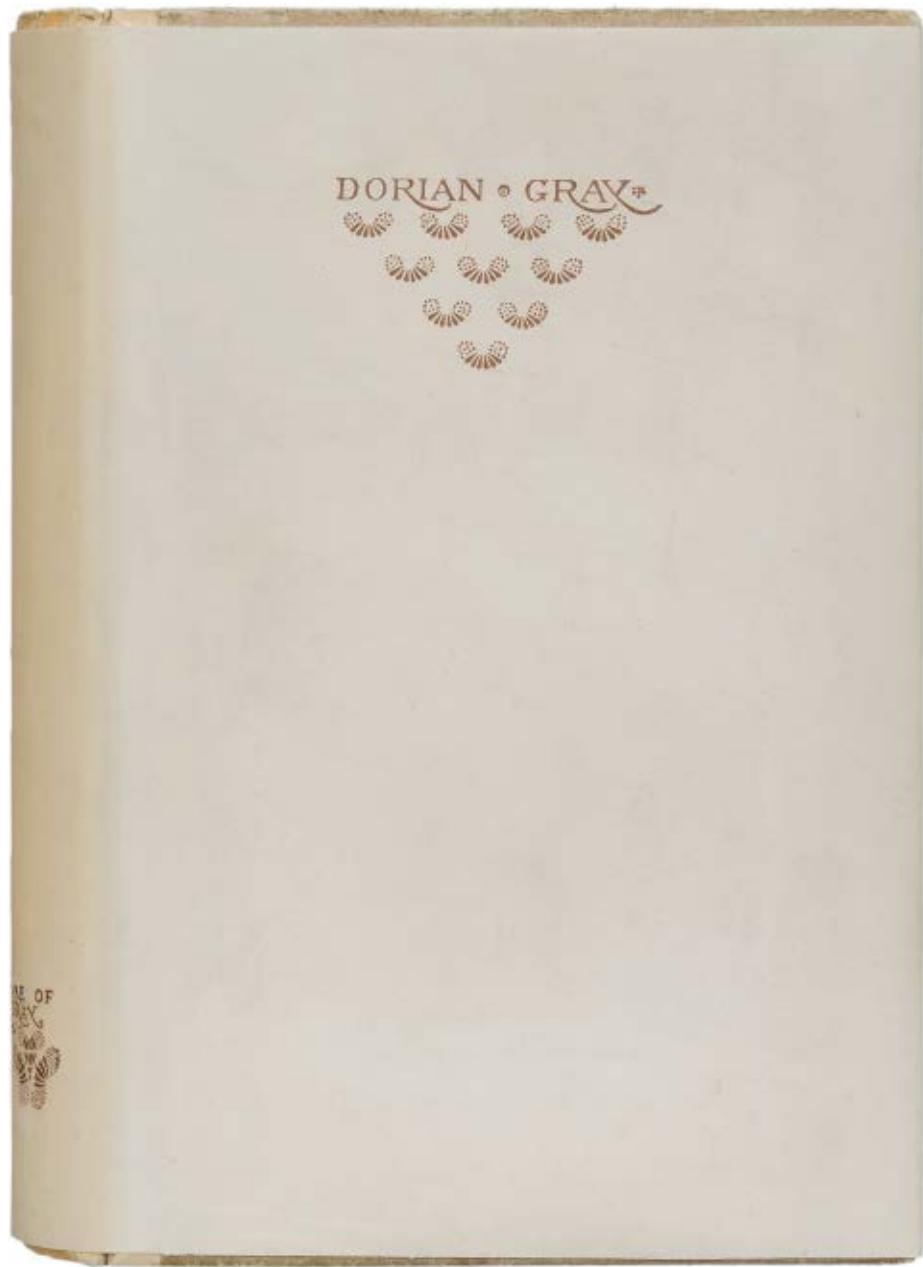
1st edition. Fine in a very good jacket with a tear at the top edge of the front panel, and small chips to the spine tips and corners, but despite its lack of perfection, here

is your warm coal to blow on. The dustjacket, is integral, and never repaired and the book underneath the jacket, is razor sharp, the cloth has no stains or wear, it's as uniformly black as the mood of a grounded teenager, and the lettering is as white as a New England yacht club, and most copies bend or break under the weight of unstated flaws, or lame excuses for them. 2,750



immediately. 3 of the chapters were largely rewritten for Putnam's American edition later in 1938, and then in 1958, White rewrote the entire book for a united publication with its sequels, collected and re-released as *The Once and Future King*. Opinions vary as to whether the revisions were improvements, or the pulsing cadence of a Slinky tumbling down stairs, the louder readers believing the latter.

Logging coincidence, that's 3 authors in a row who use initials for a first name.



in dustjacket!

Wilde, Oscar

The Picture of Dorian Gray
(London, 1891).

1st English edition of his only novel, a fantastic morality tale, focused on a portrait painting with supernatural powers. 1st printing (Bowden's name not added to the title page imprint, the Preface with the word "Preface" at the beginning of it and Wilde's name at the end of it, in larger, bolder type, etc.). Original white vellum (parchment) backed boards, former owner's neat name to endpaper, spine slightly

faded (from light, not dust), else near fine in the rare dustjacket, with small tears and chips to the spine tips and corners neatly repaired, but quite a charismatic jacket, still integral, clean as a sterile cotton swab, and one to be owned with pride. Our 1st printing has a period after "Gray" on the title page, and "nd" for "and" (page 208, 8th line from the bottom). This is not a dropped letter but a mis-setting, and though the error wasn't corrected in the early reprintings of the trade edition (the type was just left as it was), the error was corrected in the reprinting (resetting) done 2 months later for the 250 copy limited signed edition, a chilling fact that you will not be told by those trying to sell you a copy of this now expensive limited issue, who rightly recognize the peril of correctly identifying it as the 2nd edition or the 2nd printing (which it is). And this trade edition is not only earlier than the limited, but when it has its dustjacket, it's also many times rarer. 55,000

Wilde was from that atypical minority of great men, those who do not remind us of anyone else. He wrote the best comedies since Shakespeare, mastered paradox, and was the reigning wit of the 1890s, but he became a victim when society forgot that the mouse should never be a juror at the cat's trial. Dorian Gray was his only novel, and why not? When you write one like this, one is sufficient. It's undeniably a modern Gothic, and a self-evident Victorian classic, unique in the delicacy of its grim and melancholy metaphor, and it continues to maintain its appeal even in our 21st century, when millions of idiots who long for immortality, can't decide what to do on a summer afternoon when their Wi-Fi goes out. And it's a scarce 1st edition even without a jacket, and if a copy does make it to a catalog, book fair, or auction, it's almost always in condition that would make Quentin Tarantino throw-up.

Dorian Gray is an angelic youth. Basil Hallward paints his portrait and then introduces him to Lord Henry (Darth) Wotton, who corrupts him, and twists him to a life of vice. The painting turns out to be magical, so while Dorian remains young and fetching throughout his deterioration, the portrait changes, reflecting his real degeneracy. Finally, unable to cope with what he believes to be his curse (conscience is the inner dog, that will let you tiptoe past it, but that you cannot keep from barking), Dorian kills Hallward, stabs the painting, and is found dead with a knife through his heart, his face the very picture of decay and corruption, while the portrait, mystically restored to what it originally was, hangs over him, portraying an innocent, trusting, and handsome young man.

"Lying on the floor was a dead man in evening dress, with a knife in his heart. He was withered, wrinkled and loathsome of visage. It was not till they had examined the rings that they recognized who it was." –page 324

∞ ∞

I face the computer and think with my fingertips, and when I have finished one of these "catalogs as folk art" they link me to you, and some of you have ideas I wish I'd known before I put fingers to keyboard. Then you write, or text, or find me at a bookfair, or visit Century City, or whatever, and you incite my mind to reason anew. An ongoing education, without tuition, class time, teacher, lecture, or syllabus.

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and

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