Ex libris : 02/04 (Spring 1979)

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Les Heures de la Nuit

Ex Libris

Journal of the USF Library Associates

Spring, 1979
Exhibits

EXHIBITS of rare and unusual items from the University's collections are displayed in the Library on a continuing basis. Display areas are located on the fourth floor of the main library building, both in the lobby and in the Special Collections reading room. Exhibits are changed quarterly.

**Current Exhibit:** *The First Colony: Spanish Florida, 1513-1763.* The first European colony in North America, Spanish Florida originally included most of the territory later comprising the traditional "13 colonies." By 1763, however, it had shrunk to little more than the area occupied by Florida today. Using books, maps and other materials from the Library's collection of early Floridiana, this exhibit will trace the presence of Imperial Spain in Florida from the age of discovery to the British occupation in 1763. It will be on view from June 11 through August 31.

**Quarter 1, 1979:** *Chronicler of Empire: Pluck & Peril With G.A. Henty.* English writer George Alfred Henty (1832-1902) has been called the "Rudyard Kipling of boys' books." In his 80-odd novels and extensive periodical writings his historical fiction chronicled the greatness of Britain's world-spanning empire. Immensely popular in England, Henty's works were widely read in America as well. Through the medium of books and other materials drawn from the Library's comprehensive collection of Hentyana, this exhibit will provide an unusual view of 19th Century British imperialism. It will include both American and British Henty first editions, many of them notable for their decorative bindings. The exhibit will be on display from September 24 to December 12.

**Quarter 11, 1979:** *Autographs & Manuscripts From Six Centuries.* Original signatures and manuscripts written by famous persons have a fascination far beyond the mere content of the messages they convey. They provide a unique feeling of contact with people we can never actually meet. Drawn from the University's manuscript collection, the documents comprising this display range from a 1492 letter signed by Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain to a note by President John F. Kennedy. Included are holographic writings of such diverse personages as Thomas Jefferson, Ezra Pound, and Pablo Picasso. The exhibit will be on display from January 7 to March 19.
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Ex Libris

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Cover: A theatrical costume of 1720 representing the "hours of the night." From Hippolyte Lecomte’s Costumes de Theatre ... (Paris, 1824?).

All illustrations in this issue of Ex Libris are reproduced from works in the Special Collections Department of the University of South Florida Library. Photography is by the photography department of USF’s Division of Educational Resources.
The Dion Boucicault Collection At USF
by Christopher Calthrop

I FIRST visited the University of South Florida in the Fall of 1969. A member of the teaching staff visiting the United Kingdom had contacted me, and over dinner we talked about my great-grandfather, Dion Boucicault. I learned to my astonishment that Boucicault's own collection of manuscript plays had found its way to Tampa, Florida, and that this collection was one of the jewels of the Special Collections Library. I had known for some years that the collection had disappeared from a New York apartment in the 1930's.

In 1885, Boucicault, by then an American citizen, had married Louise Thorndyke, an American actress. He was 64, she was 21. It was a love match, and when he died five years later his will named her as his literary executor. She inherited full rights to royalties from such famous plays as The Poor of New York, The Octoroon, The Shaughraun, and many more, covering a career of writing and acting that began in 1838 and ended in 1890 with his death (a career unparalleled in the history of Victorian theatre). Mrs. Boucicault kept the collection in a large trunk in her apartment at 350 W. 55 Street. Dr. Albert Johnson, who researched Boucicault's life and career for a quarter of a century and was planning a biography when he died last year, has described movingly how he visited the apartment in 1958 and to his amazement found himself talking to the old black janitor who had looked after Louise for many years. The janitor recalled that she had asked him to put the trunk in the cellar, and that when a lawyer looked for it after her death in 1956 (she survived Boucicault by 66 years), it could not be found. Apparently, falling on hard times, Louise had sold the collection in the early Thirties to novelist Fitzhugh Green. Green's widow had, in turn, sold it in 1956 to Professor Jack Clay. Later, when Clay joined the staff of USF, he intended to use the collection for his doctoral dissertation on The Theatre of Dion Boucicault. The dissertation was never completed but he did use one of the most important manuscripts, Belle Lamar, a rousing melodrama about the Civil War, for a production still remembered with pleasure by many who saw it and who were still at USF at the time of my first visit. The production was authentic, thanks to the original promptbook and music from the Boucicault collection.

So I undertook the journey from England to Tampa, where I stayed for two months, working in the Special Collections Library, where Margaret Chapman, the Librarian at the time, encouraged and helped me to

Contemporary cabinet portrait of Dion Boucicault in his most famous role as "Conn, the Shaughraun."
catalogue and, in part, to evaluate this astounding collection of Victorian theatre material. Many of the manuscripts are in Boucicault's hand, and bear evidence to the careful rewriting that marks much of his work. Melodrama is well represented by *The Trial of Effie Deans; or, The Heart of Midlothian* (1860), *Robert Emmet* (1884), *Faust and Marguerite* (1854); comedy and farce by *Vice Versa* (1883), *The Jilt* (1885), *Janet Pride* (1854), and *Rip van Winkle* (1866). There are articles in manuscript about the American theatre of his time, and unproduced and unpublished plays which are a mine of information for scholars.

When I revisited USF in 1977, I was surprised to learn from Jay Dobkin, who succeeded Margaret Chapman as Special Collections Librarian, that the collection had not been used by any scholar, American or British, since my visit in 1969. I very much hope that this short account will attract attention to this important source of information about the work methods and fertility of mind of one of the most prolific authors in the history of the theatre; Boucicault wrote more than 160 known plays of which at least 140 were produced, many with outstanding success. I have made available my notes on the collection to Richard Fawkes, whose biography of Boucicault will appear in the Fall.
Dion Boucicault
by Richard Fawkes

DION BOUCICault—actor, playwright, adaptor, stage director, manager, producer, innovator—was, for almost fifty years, the most important and influential man of the theatre on both sides of the Atlantic. He wrote, adapted or translated, according to his own estimation (and I tend to believe him), some 250 plays. He coined the phrase 'sensation drama' and brought to perfection the type of play it describes. He bridged the gap between the comedies of Farquhar, Congreve, Sheridan, and Goldsmith, and those of Wilde, Shaw, Synge, and O'Casey. He contributed decisively towards the establishment of the long run, of the touring production, of copyright for dramatists and of the royalty system which allowed later, greater writers to make their living from the theatre. He was instrumental in cutting the length of performances from several pieces lasting several hours to one, full-length play, and he abolished the custom of letting in patrons for half-price after nine o'clock. He introduced fire-proof scenery, demonstrated how to handle crowd scenes long before ensemble playing became fashionable, and was a superb teacher. Among the talents he encouraged or promoted were those of Henry Irving, Harry Montague, Joseph Jefferson, Henry Miller, and David Belasco. He was a skillful actor, considered by many to be great, especially in the Irish roles he wrote for himself. During the third quarter of the 19th Century he was the most prolific, most prosperous, most widely imitated playwright of the English-speaking stage.

Boucicault was born in Dublin on 27 December 1820. In all probability he was the illegitimate son of Dr. Dionysius Lardner, a populariser of science, who gave him his name, became his guardian, and paid for most of his education, firstly in Dublin, then in London. While at school, Boucicault took part in a school play and wrote his own first piece, Napoleon's Old Guard. Later revised as The Old Guard it enjoyed considerable success in America and England. After a short spell as Lardner's apprentice Boucicault, aged 17, ran away to become an actor, writing all the while. His first major success came when he was 20 with the comedy London Assurance. Unable to repeat the success, his penchant for high living and overspending forced him to accept an offer from Benjamin Webster, manager of the Haymarket, to translate and adapt from the French. From then on Boucicault dedicated himself to providing what the public wanted. From 1844 to 1848 he travelled frequently to France, turning out play after play and establishing himself as an extremely competent playwright. He also found himself a wife, a widow twice his age who possessed a small fortune and died under mysterious circumstances. Some malicious rumours (Boucicault was the sort of man who attracted scandal all his life) claimed he had pushed her off a Swiss mountain. By 1848 he had spent her money and was declared bankrupt.

In 1850 he joined Charles Kean at the Princess's and produced two of his most important adaptations, The Corsican Brothers and Louis XI. An affair with Agnes
Robertson, Kean's ward and a member of the company, made him quit Kean's employment in 1853 before Kean could fire him, and he and Agnes left for America. For the next seven years he managed Agnes's career, turning out many potboilers to show off her talents as they toured the States, returned to acting himself, became involved in the passing of the 1856 Copyright Act, entered management unsuccessfully in New Orleans and Washington, and opened the Winter Garden in New York. Among the most important plays from this period are those utilising current events, the 'Contemporary Dramas' such as *The Poor of New York* (1857) about the financial panic of that year; *Jessie Brown* (1858) about the Relief of Lucknow; and *The Octoroon* (1859) which dealt with the explosive subject of slavery.

*The Octoroon*, with Agnes Robertson in the lead and Boucicault playing a grunting Indian, opened at the Winter Garden on 6 December 1859. A week later Boucicault and Agnes were out of the cast following a row with Boucicault's partner over money. They moved to Laura Keene's rival theatre and there, on 29 March 1860, produced *The Colleen Bawn*, a stop-gap for another Boucicault play which unexpectedly failed, and one of the most important dramas of the century. When Boucicault took it to London that Fall he entered into a unique arrangement with Webster, manager of the Adelphi, to be paid a royalty instead of a customary flat fee. The play ran for a record 230 consecutive performances, the first long 'run' in the history of the English theatre (for the first time, when actors could be engaged for the run of a piece, they were paid a living wage). Boucicault also formed companies to tour the play, thereby heralding the end of the old and largely inefficient stock system. *The Colleen Bawn* was also the last play seen in a public theatre by Queen Victoria.

ACTING NIGHTLY in the same piece irked Boucicault and after a blazing row with Webster which ended in court (as F.B. Chatterton, another manager who crossed words with Boucicault, remarked, everyone rowed with the playwright if only they knew him long enough), he spent the fortune he and Agnes had made from the play on opening his own theatre. The conversion of Astley's was a magnificent project but it ended ignominiously in 1863 with Boucicault's bankruptcy. Being the remarkable man he was, he soon bounced back, largely through his 1857 success *The Poor of New York*, which he localised for each new town.

His next major piece was *Arrah-na-Pogue* (1864). Ten years and 32 other plays, some good, some poor, separated it from *The Shaughraun*, the third and probably the best...
of his Irish dramas, and the one which made him the most money. In 1875 it was estimated that 25 million dollars had been spent by the public to see Boucicault's plays. Although Boucicault never stopped working, it was clear that *The Shaughraun* was to be his last major work. In 1876, on the night the play closed in London, Boucicault's eldest son Willie was killed in a train crash. Soon after the tragedy he returned to New York to live with actress Katherine Rogers, leaving Agnes in London. He continued to earn his living from writing and touring. In 1885 he became the first big star to visit Australia. In the company he took with him were his son Dot, daughter Nina, and Louise Thorndyke, a 21 year old actress, whom he married in a Sydney Registry office. News of the bigamous marriage created a storm - Agnes filed for divorce; and people flocked to see the couple in *The Jilt*, the title of which took on a new meaning. Agnes won her divorce and Boucicault and Louise went through a second marriage ceremony in New York.

Forced by increasing costs, old age and the fact that his work was out of fashion, to give up touring, Boucicault became a teacher at Palmer's Madison Square Theatre School, but still writing. He died in New York on 18 September 1890 with unfinished plays on his desk. "It has been a long jig," he wrote two weeks before his death, "and I'm just beginning to see the pathos of it. I have written for a monster who forgets."

Gradually Boucicault is being remembered. His importance as both a man of the theatre and a dramatist is slowly being recognised. He may not be one of the world's great playwrights but the best of his work is the product of a man who knew the theatre, knew how to construct a play, knew how to entertain. On the stage his plays come to life and I am convinced there is much of his drama that would do well today.

There is still considerable work to be done on Boucicault. There are still many mysteries about the man and his work that need to be resolved. Many of the answers will be found in the collection of Boucicault material in the Special Collections Library of USF.
EVERYONE is familiar with the old cliche about clothes making the man. As with all cliches, lurking within this oversimplification of the human condition is a goodly measure of truth. Ever since Og the Apeman decided the bear's furry coat would look better on Og than it did on the bear, clothing has ranked with food and shelter as one of humanity's essentials. Going far beyond the simple need to protect our vulnerable skins from a too often hostile, environment, clothing has played a pivotal role in society almost since Og became the pacesetter of the cavern set.

The pattern, cut, and material of clothing have over the centuries assumed an almost infinite variety of combinations. Little of this profuse diversity in garments has been capricious, however. In every society and historical period clothing has served as a badge of time and place, its materials, style, and so forth reflecting facets of the civilization that produced it and its wearers. A person's dress (or sometimes lack thereof) has always made important statements about the wearer's sex, wealth, profession, moral beliefs, nationality, and overall place in the social order. The ornate but restrictive clothing of Victorian ladies, for instance, was both a "uniform" showing what they were and a reflection of their ornate, restricted place in contemporary life. Modes of dress capture in a uniquely graphic manner the spirit and social concepts of the eras they represent.

An interesting and colorful look at the fascinating history of clothing is provided by the many works on historic costume housed in the USF rare books collection. In many formats and languages, these unusual volumes range in date from the 16th Century to the early decades of the 20th. Within their pages are illustrated costumes and costume accessories from almost every period and place. Coverage in types of costume is concentrated, however, on European dress of the 19th Century and earlier, with heavy emphasis on French modes. The volumes in the collection incorporate information on almost every aspect of dress and personal adornment: there are works on armor, military uniforms, clerical dress, hair styles, jewelry, and even eyeglasses. There are books of theatrical costumes as well as works devoted to contemporary fashion. This adds an interesting dimension; it's almost as interesting seeing what 17th Century Europeans thought ancient Romans wore as it is to see what they actually did wander about in.

The nucleus of the University's collection of rare costume books was acquired during the sale of the noted Hacker Art Book collection of early works on fashion, offered for
sale in 1970. The 54 major works acquired at that time have since grown by gift and purchase, resulting in a collection of choice costume-related books that would delight any bibliophile. Almost all of these rare items are profusely illustrated, over half containing hand-colored plates. Etchings and engravings for early costume books were often executed by talented artists of the time, then painstakingly colored with watercolors and gouache. Often each plate is a work of art in its own right. Many of the Library's fine costume books are also notable for fine bindings and the overall excellence of their design.

With the range and variety of materials available in the collection it is possible to mention only a few of the most interesting. The earliest costume book in the USF collection is a fine copy of Cesare Vecellio's *Habiti Antichi et Moderni...*, one of the greatest Renaissance costume books. The USF copy is the second edition, published in Venice in 1598. The 1598 edition was a major expansion of the previous 1590 edition, having 507 full page woodcuts as opposed to 420 in the earlier work. Notable in the 1598 edition is the inclusion of 21 woodcuts of American Indians, including one of the "King of Florida." In addition, the Italian text is accompanied by a Latin translation made for this edition by Sulstastius Gratilianus. The volume is bound in a contemporary vellum binding.

THE LARGEST costume work in the collection, both in size and in number of volumes, is *Denkmaler des Theaters*, a set of twelve portfolios relating to various aspects of the theatre. The set was published by the Austrian National-bibliothek at Vienna in 1926-1930. Each of the set's twelve portfolios consists of a text volume and a number of matted plates, usually in color and of considerable graphic interest. Many of the portfolios are in whole or in part devoted to theatrical costume. The USF set is particularly interesting in that it was a gift from theatre director Max Reinhardt to his co-director Wilhelm Dieterle for Christmas 1934, the year their acclaimed film version of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was released. The set bears two autograph inscriptions from Reinhardt to Dieterle.

The earliest work relating to French costume in the collection is a series of 19 beautifully hand-colored copperplates entitled *Cris de Paris*. Each plate is individually matted, and the whole is enclosed in a green morocco case. Executed by Jean Baptiste Bonnart at Paris around 1700, these plates form part of an exceedingly rare series of 36 prints illustrating costumes and distinctive cries of Parisian street vendors. This interesting series is complemented by another book on French street vendors, Adrien Joly's *Les Petits Acteurs du Grand Theatre*... (Paris, Marinet, circa 1815). One of the
most beautiful publications of its kind, Joly's book includes 60 magnificent hand-colored plates. Particularly notable among USF's French costume works is a copy of Hippolyte Lecomte's *Costumes de Theatre de 1600 a 1820* (Paris, circa 1820) series of 104 hand-colored lithographs depicts French theatrical costume in all its elaborate and imaginative variety.

In addition to monographic works on costume, the USF costume collection includes a number of early fashion magazines. Perhaps the most interesting of these journals is a very rare German fashion periodical entitled *Allgemeines Europaeisches Journal*. The USF collection contains 22 issues of this journal, which was published between 1794 and 1798. Included in the USF run are 45 hand-colored fashion plates and 25 other plates. Particularly fascinating are 22 original samples of cloth in fine condition and unfaded by time. The most attractive, however, of our rare fashion periodicals is a complete run of the exquisite French fashion almanac *Falbalas & Fanfreluches* (Paris, 1922-1926). Consisting of five volumes bound as one in an orange full-morocco binding, this journal is adorned with profusion of beautifully colored plates and text illustrations, all by George Barbier.

Although primarily used as a resource for theatrical costume design, USF's collection of rare costume-related works provide colorful and illuminating insights on why people wore what they wore. For serious scholarship, artistic enjoyment, or just curiosity to see the wild get-ups our ancestors wore, these rare and beautiful books certainly merit examination.
Associates' Events & Activities

General Meeting and Open House:
The 1978/79 Library Associates general membership meeting and open house was held in the Special Collections Department of the University Library from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 23. In addition to the business portion of the meeting, the event provided a fine opportunity for members of the Associates to meet each other and examine firsthand the many rare and interesting materials housed in the department. Guided tours of the department were offered by Jay Dobkin and his staff, as well as a chance to see a variety of things from early children's books to a fortune in Confederate money. All told, the evening was both entertaining and enjoyable. All this and refreshments too!

Book Sale Preparations:
The task of gathering books for the Associates' annual book sale is well under way. Due to many generous donations of redundant volumes by Associates members and other friends of the USF Library, we have accumulated several thousand books already. By the time November rolls around we should have a veritable mountain of good books on hand. We will, that is, if we can count on continued support through donations of unwanted reading material. We'll need the help of all our friends to make the sale the success we want it to be. So if you have books you don't need, please keep us in mind. For information relative to donations, please call us at 974-2731. With your help, the 1979 sale will be the best event yet.
SEVERAL years ago I gave to the University of South Florida Library a big boxful of old books that I had been carrying around in cars and trucks and storing in the attics and closets of various homes in which I've lived for the past twenty years. I should call the books volumes, I suppose, because most of them lack the hard covers we expect of books, although pamphlets might more accurately describe their physical appearance even though they are not pamphlets either. These volumes are mainly acting versions of popular plays presented on the American stage during the 19th Century. Some are early American plays, sentimental comedies, melodramas, farces, burlesques, and some are English plays from the time of Shakespeare through the early 19th Century. Most of these plays were printed in America from the early years of the 19th Century through shortly after the Civil War. Also included are some miscellaneous volumes such as *The Yankee Story Teller's Own Book; And Aethiopian Reciter's Vade Mecum. Containing a Superb Collection of Yankee Stories and Negro Lectures as Recited by the Most Celebrated Down Easters & Kentuck Screamers*, all packed into one volume some 36 pages long, published in Philadelphia and New York by Turner and Fisher in 1836.

How I came to possess these volumes, or books, or pamphlets, is a personal story, and so is how I came to donate them to the University. Therefore, this will be a personal and not a scholarly essay, one that will range far in time and subject, incorporating a cast of characters as varied as Plymouth Plantation's William Bradford; a straw-hatted runaway; a librarian whose laugh sounded like the last asthmatic wheeze of a consumptive bagpipe; and a dog loved almost more than a son. To carry yourself safely through the exotic and sometimes musty but never, I hope, dull memories you are about to travel among, you need only keep in mind two thoughts. The first is that my wife's family is nothing like mine. The second is that, as Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote in his poem "Each and All,"

> All are needed by each one;
> Nothing is fair or good alone.

Everything connects at some point, no matter how distant that point may seem.

THE COLLECTION of plays and miscellaneous volumes that I gave to the University of South Florida Library came from my wife's side of the family, not mine. They were given to me to use as I saw fit a little over twenty years ago by my mother-in-law, Mrs. Winifred Gray Bowker, and her mother, Mrs. Ethel Maxwell Gray. They were originally collected around the middle of the 19th Century by Mrs. Gray's father.

As I have already written, my wife's family is not like mine. My family I think of as immigrant (one set of grandparents came from Ireland and Germany), and unlanded Southern white (journeying through the Cumberland Gap into Kentucky around 1830). They would not have collected plays: the Southern branch seems to have read very little at all, although they were wonderful people. I could never figure out why my father took so long to read a page of the newspaper in the evening (I never saw him with a book, although I found, while rummaging through his underwear drawer when I was a kid, a copy of De Maupassant's short stories which he took away from me when he caught me reading it, saying that he had "heard" that the stories were "off color"), why he frequently fell asleep while reading the paper, which meant that I had to impatiently and rudely wait until he had dropped it while snoozing or until he would throw it at me like a bone to the
starving dog I was playing, saying angrily, "here take it, I don't want it anyway." Years after he was dead it occurred to me too late to apologize that he probably did not read very well and did not want me to know it. He had very little education as a boy in the South and though the school of hard knocks and his motherwit had turned him into a mathematical whiz who could solve complicated problems in his head without putting pencil to paper (or as I explain to my children, without pressing finger to the button of a pocket calculator) he never had the opportunity to learn much about reading for his wicked stepmother had removed him very early from school and made him work.

His side of my family did not emphasize book learning. My Great Aunt Daisy, who had coal black hair until her death at about 85 years, I remember was a terrific snuff shot - she would roll a pinch of snuff under her upper lip and after a while, cold winters in Kentucky, could zip tobacco juice sizzling into the coal fire in her room as swiftly as though the spray had been snapped by a slingshot. She only stopped chewing snuff the last year of her life when she was bedridden and could no longer guarantee an accurately arched jet over the side of her bed and into the spittoon on the floor. My Great Uncle Ike - who weighed about 250 pounds but had very small, pouting lips like a parrot's soft beak, would lull me from my warm bed when we visited those same cold Kentucky winter's mornings with his crooned and to me from the city romantic command, "Jaaaaacckkkk, gawta git awp, gawta go feed the hawwgs" - was like my Great Aunt Daisy, not one to deal with books. At daybreak when we arose they would deal with breakfasts of soft, white buttermilk biscuits, red-eye ham with brown gravy, fried quail, fried rabbit, fried squirrel ("Squirrel? Jack? Squirrel?" my suburban New Jersey sisters who did not make the trip South would later shriek to me horrorstricken, "Squirrel? You are real squirrel? Jack, that's just like eating RATS!"). Aunt Daisy and Uncle Ike left me a proper legacy but not one involving books.

Now my wife's family, as I have said twice now, is different. They were educated. They went to Harvard, Cornell, Mount Holyoke. They came over on the Mayflower. They read books. They were ... well, not snobs really, not exactly, at least not all of them some of the time and some of them not all of the time, but you could call them, at least so they seemed to me ... established? genteel? elite? Something like that.

There is an Aunt among them, a Great Aunt to some, but apparently nobody's mother, a great grand old Aunt who gets lots of Christmas gifts tendered her from friends and kin, who always properly acknowledges the gifts, who wrote to one such admirer "I have received many gifts this holiday season. Some were beautiful, some were useful. Yours was neither." To another she wrote "I have received seven pairs of gloves thus far this Christmas. Yours, I hope, were the last." A pair of gloves came with her card.

It was a member of this family who first told me about the plays-my wife's grandmother, Mrs. Ethel Maxwell Gray. She was definitely in the family tradition. She told me once of a household dog her husband had when she was a young married woman, about whose ill-temper the neighbors complained. "But," she said smiling sweetly, "that dog never bit any people - only tradesmen." This grandmother had been very tall in her youth, like the lovely ladies in pre-Raphaelite drawings. When I knew her (this was two decades ago) she was in her eighties and bent almost double like a hand clenched by arthritis, but she still drove around town in an enormous blue Oldsmobile which was her pride. She kept better care of that huge car than I do of my life, the worst moment of which came once when she permitted me in an emergency to borrow it to drive my wife
her granddaughter someplace, and I brought the car back almost exactly out of gas so that the
next morning when she tried to start this car, which resembled a four-wheeled blue and
chrome dreadnaught, the engine simply whined emptily like a cowardly cat. I felt as though I had borrowed from the Vatican the chalice Christ used at the Last Supper and had brought it back chipped. When I die and go to Hell I will be consigned to the innermost circle of punishment where traitors like Judas are locked forever in ice, for returning that grand woman's car gasless.

Mrs. Ethel Maxwell Gray's husband Ernest looked like he was made of oak. He had worked his way through Harvard and I think he felt contempt for anyone who had not or could not. This man loved a dog named Jack; He may have loved others too - he was a New Englander and kept his love beneath the surface if he had any -but it was known that he loved this dog Jack. He had Jack's portrait painted and hung it in his dining room, near the mounted carcass of a gigantic wall-eyed pike he had once caught, for whom he had somewhat less affection. Ernest Gray's dog's rival was Ernest's son, a young man six spindly feet and eight skinny inches tall, whom he (the father not the dog) was putting through Harvard. To make matters worse the son was an art major (the father was an inventor and administrator). Naturally the dog Jack, best friend to his master, hated the son, and ripped into him whenever he came home on vacations from Harvard (the son, not the dog). Finally the father was told he would have to choose between Jack his dog, and his son. There was a silence in the family life while he made his decision, a long pause, an audible valley of absolutely quiet indecision, a chasm of soundlessness similar to the prolonged emptiness in the air following the question a robber once asked Jack Benny - "Your money or your life, Mr. Benny."

THIS WAS the family that produced the books, which were originally the property of the father of the grandmother Mrs. Ethel M. Gray whose husband had to agonize over whether his son or his dog would brighten his life after Harvard.

So the books belonged to my wife's great grandfather. But how did he get them? And why did he keep them? Now here is that story, told by my wife's mother, Mrs. Winifred Maxwell Bowker, with only an occasional aside from me, the son of unlanded Southrons and immigrants. I wanted to tell this story myself, but my wife's mother has beautifully anticipated me.

"Dear Jack,

"Having now gone through the material Eleanor [her sister] has from Mother's [Mrs. Ethel Maxwell Gray's] files - provoking some tears and some laughter - I find disappointingly little on Grandpa Maxwell [the collector of the volumes]. There are complete records of the families of Grandma and Grandpa Gray - extending back to William Bradford (who of course arrived in 1620) and John Gray - who came to New England in (only) 1718. The latter, by the way, just to counter William Bradford a bit, could reputedly trace his ancestry back to a Gray family which settled in Perthshire, England, about 1300, and emigrated to Ireland - to Ulster, in fact-in the early 17th century. They possessed originally the 'lordship of Gray' - so the account saith."
"We also unearthed a tattered piece of paper dated 1812 and identifying Richard Hosea, aged 18, as a sailor in the U.S. Navy - also a notebook with pages partly welded together, which describes the wanderings of his son in the early 1800's - to the west coast and other places (he would be Grandma Maxwell's grandfather).

"Eleanor says one Thomas Maxwell emigrated from Maine to Boston in the very early days. We did find a birthday record of all then living members of the family back to 1821, written, we think, by Grandma Maxwell, but the record is only of birthdates, plus one rather nice, sentimental verse on 'My Birthday,' again maybe by Grandma.

"Grandpa's full-name was George Brewer Frost Maxwell - named for his maternal grandfather, who bore the first three names. Grandpa was born on September 6, 1848. His death year is penciled in - 1915 - no date. I know though that he died about a week before my brother was born [Bill, the one the dog didn't like] on June 1, since I have a vivid memory of my last sight of him, that morning, before I left for school. By the way, we assume he was born in Medford Mass. - where he lived during his working life.

"Grandpa and Grandma lived with us for all the years since my babyhood until his death, and hers, which was much later. The things I know about his life were told me by him - and what a story teller he was! His father was a stern man who believed in hard work and discipline for one and all. We did have young George's diary once. The preponderance of entries in it stated simply: 'chopped wood.' Not much evidence of literary talent there! I don't know where the diary is now, maybe it's back in Philadelphia in a box where I left various keepsakes, maybe a poem he wrote for me, and the manuscript of a musical comedy that George Maxwell wrote called 'Rudolph, or, The Count's Oath.' I think it never saw the light of day in printed form. Can't remember how it went, but what a marvelous title!

"Anyway, at age 14 (around 1862) George acquired a new straw hat, which for some reason he was forbidden to wear without parental sanction. He did wear it however, and on returning home so adorned, was thrown out of the house to seek his fortune. He went away, I think for several years, and joined a
theatrical company in New York or Buffalo. Eleanor and I disagree. I don't know how his father tracked him down, but he did. He went and viewed the performance and afterward went backstage, told George his mother was gravely ill, and beseeched him to come home. This was all a lie, but George did go home (bringing copies of many of the plays he had acted in with him). For whatever reason, he stayed in Medford and was apparently trained as a cabinet maker. We had evidence of his skill in a truly fabulous barn and dollhouse, the first built for his own children, the second for us. Judy [my wife] had the dollhouse for a while, then it went to Peggy and Bill's children, where it disintegrated. (I saw the dollhouse once. It resembled my childhood home except that it was slightly larger and had no cold cellar. Bill is the son whose father Ernest almost preferred a dog. Bill's real name is Ernest but everyone called him Bill, he said, because he arrived the first of the month (June 1). Your father liking a dog better than you affects your sense of humor, I guess. Lots of things disintegrated at Bill's house but not his love for his own children, one of whom carried on family tradition by graduating from Harvard partly through scholarships. Another son is an actor and playwright of whom his father is very proud. This son did not inherit a gene for a straw hat, however.) Later in his career with a furniture company he designed their furniture. The company sank without a trace, bearing his then current fortunes with it.

AT ONE POINT he was a reporter on the local newspaper, maybe the Medford Mercury, which he and Grandma had sent to our-house while they lived with us. His favorite story about that concerned a fire alarm which he covered in the course of duty, only to pull up before his own house to find Grandma Maxwell in the doorway with [her and Grandpa Maxwell's son, my mother-in-law's] Uncle Leon, aged two and completely naked, clinging to Grandma Maxwell's skirts, she indignantly defending the premises from firemen. It was only a kitchen stove mishap after all. Grandpa apparently retired from this checkered and largely unproductive career when he was only about 50, due to an affliction then called 'Bright's disease,' which Eleanor says is a kidney ailment. It affected his sight, so that he was what we would call legally blind. Nowadays that would have brought him a disability allowance, then it brought him nothing. I think he and Grandma lived on my father's charity after that [her father being the man who so loved his dog that he almost gave his only begotten son to the world]. "Grandpa Maxwell somehow managed to get [his son] Leon through Tufts, and after that paid for his study in Germany. (The music library at Tulane University is named after this Leon Maxwell).

"It is surely a tribute to his personality and character that he was much loved in our town, even by our Dad, who wasn't given to easy affection [arf arf, you can bark that again]. He and I had a close association, largely because as the oldest (I was 12 when he died in 1915) I read to him a great deal, since he could not read any more. I recall the elaborate and fanciful stories he used to tell me. After he died I often lay awake and comforted myself with a promise to put these stories on paper for him. I never did.

"I also remember his candy-pulling (he loved to cook) at Christmas. That rope of taffy flying across the kitchen! He built me a little toy theatre and we put on plays. The characters were paper dolls on blocks, pulled back and forth with strings. Mother [the woman whose car I let run out of gas: Mrs. Ethel Maxwell Gray please forgive me!] made the dolls. I can still recall how beautiful Cinderella was. Can't remember the Prince at all, or whether we acted 'a capella' or had a script. He also built a miniature Bronx Zoo.
That was where I was taken every birthday, to the real one. I still like zoos!

"The culminating activity on every Christmas day was a magic lantern show conducted by Grandpa Maxwell and consisting of slides shown on a sheet stretched between the dining room and living room. Some were scenic, some were stories in sequences of four frames, and some were comic, or we thought they were. I recall one which showed a boy sitting on a barrel. You slid a shield affair over the slide and presto! he fell in. It was a hit every year. And of course I remember how he entertained me with snatches of drama, prowling around the kitchen with menacing strides, declaiming and grimacing.

"Such pieces of memories are all I can offer. As far as I know, nothing of his ever saw print save for the articles in the newspaper, none preserved. I know he directed and acted, probably in local companies after his abortive excursion into The Real Theatre. I do remember his talking of putting on minstrel shows, for which he probably created skits, patter, songs, and so on. Mother use to tell me about seeing him appear dressed as a little boy, with straw boater with a ribbon behind, short pants, the whole bit. What about his beard? What did he do with it, I wonder? Anyway, he came on stage, leading a goat on a leash, and singing,

Daddy wouldn't buy me a bow-wow,
Daddy wouldn't buy me a bow-wow,
I have a little goat
And I'm very fond of that-
But I'd rather have a bow-wow-wow.
Enough Said?"

Enclosed with this wonderfully remembered note from George Maxwell's granddaughter was an old newspaper clipping, date and origin unknown, chronicling the history of "Mr. Allen's Dramatic Combination... which has given quite a large number of entertainments in this town for the past four years" and which was now ready "to fill engagements to give entertainments of a high order." Among the players listed is "Mr. G.F.B. Maxwell," and among the plays performed are "The Miller of Derwent Water," "Taming a Tiger," and "My Uncle's Will." I tried to date the article by examining the internal evidence supplied on the reverse side of the theatrical review, an article devoted to news about women. One paragraph told of women in Edinburgh who were striking for the right to vote. The lengthiest item in the article deserves full quotation for I suspect it manifests the spirit of the times and the editorial attitude of the newspaper best: "They have a new way of curing women's hysterics in India. They tie the patient's hands and feet together, and then thrust cotton wicks steeped in oil up her nostrils and into her ears. A woman who has hysterical dumbness will recover her speech in a very short time under this treatment." What such a woman's first words might be upon recovering her speech after this treatment the article did not state. I concluded the clipping was from another world than mine, so I dropped the idea of trying to ascertain its precise age.

SHORTLY AFTER my wife Judith and I were engaged about 24 years ago, both her mother and grandmother mentioned to me the old plays George Maxwell had long ago collected. I would like to say that we searched madly for them and were disappointed for many months, only to discover them by chance behind a secret panel with some manuscript stories by Edgar Poe, but I cannot. In fact I honestly cannot remember what kind of receptacle they were in when they were brought to me, but they were neatly piled
and in relatively good shape.

They turned out to be fairly valuable in terms of money when I had them appraised after giving them to the University, but long before that I knew they were valuable as a record of the 19th Century American stage. Most of the plays are minor and by today's standards very bad (as are most popular plays today, by any standards), but many are simply not printed anywhere else, and exist only in these little chapbook player's editions. There are about 425 volumes, not all of which are plays: some magic books, novels, and miscellaneous prose works were in the collection also. The plays typically include brief stage histories, casts of characters naming the actors who played the various roles, diagrams of scenic layouts, stage directions, and some have George Maxwell's penciled-in directions which probably represent actual playing conditions. The plays and their playwrights are now mostly forgotten, with certain exceptions such as Dion Boucicault and his Octoroon, a number of Shakespeare's plays, and a version of the century's most popular American comedy, Rip Van Winkle. But the plays are those that were acted during the century, that theatrical companies performed because audiences wanted them. We might scoff at Black-Eyed Susan, or All in the Downs! "A Nautical and Domestic Melo-Drama in Three Acts by Douglas Jerrold," or Shakespeare's Early Days, by C.A. Somerset (author of A day After the Fair, Crazy Jane, and Yes), or Catching an Heiress, "An Original Petite Comedy" by Charles Selby, author of Captain Stevens, A Day In Paris, Married Rake, Military Execution, Unfinished Gentleman, Heiress of Bruges, The Two Murders, Guardian Sylph, Domestic Arrangements, and others - but they are works similar to our own "Love Story" or "Saturday Night Fever." To study these plays and their writers is to engage in an investigation of popular culture artifacts that can tell us much about some of the most basic assumptions of life in the 19th Century that more formal and serious studies often miss. In "Obadiah Bashful's First and Last Courtship," a skit from the Yankee Story Teller's Own Book, for example, you can hear some real and flavorful Yankee language of a sort that Nathaniel Hawthorne never supplies. "Well, now Obed, you jist might as well be out courtin Deb Jones, as to be squattin down here on your hunkers, and you know, Obed, if you die unmarried, the name of Bashful will be extinct," Obed's father tells him. Obed replies "Oh well, now father, I don't know nothin 'bout instinct, but I can't go to court Deb, for you know she dresses her hair so nice, and she's such a rotten nice gal that every feller 'bout these parts is half crazy after her ...I guess I rubbed two tallow candles, there or thereabouts, into my hair, tryin to make it curl - but I swan... it stuck out for all sense jist like park-and-pine quills."

Every so often I would sift through the volumes, arranging them by authors and
alphabetically, then mixing them all up again while looking for a special title I thought I had remembered. At first I thought I would one day study them systematically, or some aspect of them, and so I would cart them around with me wherever I taught, in Morgantown, West Virginia; Chapel Hill, North Carolina; Lexington, Virginia; and finally down here in Tampa. I crated them in wooden boxes and then in paper bags and then back in sealed cartons again, reading bits in them, using a couple of books on "Darkey Plays" and "Minstrel Life" when I taught black American drama (as examples of white impersonation of black life). I hesitated placing the books in any one library because I felt that I might be moving on and they had become a part of my life by that time, and I hated the idea of leaving them behind somewhere - they were, after all, a kind of gift my wife's family had entrusted to me.

But then three things happened pretty much at once. Even though I seemed to be here at South Florida permanently (I came in 1962), every so often my family and I would travel away, twice to Africa and once to Spain, and once for two years to the strangest and most exotic place of all, Miami. Each time we rented out our house and each time I was not quite certain I wanted to leave the books behind though I could not take them with us. Once we had rented to a topless go-go dancer and when she left she took all our best rock and roll records with her: how did I know she was not also a secret luster after old American plays? And the books were deteriorating in the heat and from the random cockroach who strayed by and had, like Don Marquis' archy, a literary taste. That did not settle properly with me. The books deserved a better, more secure home. Secondly, I slowly realized that while I liked to leaf through them and come up with bits of discoveries in them, I would never devote the scholarly care to them that was rightfully theirs. I would always have another project to finish before I got to them. And finally, all along I had been waiting for the right library to give the books to, and it became obvious to me that the University of South Florida Library was the one.

Now I would like to tell about how I selected the USF Library, and that will be the last story I will tell. I know some will wonder at this point when is the man ever going to stop rambling about these cursed books - but remember, Camerado, who touches this article touches a man who is giving up a piece of himself! I am letting go! I am the last private link in a human chain stretching back at least as far as William Bradford. Giving up a book is no simple matter if you love books and remember each one you've possessed, and remember bitterly each one you've lost. Or think about it the way a person contemplates planning a burial - you'd want your loved ones someplace you could relate to, where you and they belonged. A book lover wouldn't just dump his books anywhere, he would place them where they'd be wanted and needed and cared for.

THIS IS WHY for me the right library I was important. The first library I ever used was the Hilton Branch of the Maplewood New Jersey library. I occasionally used my primary school library but always with a feeling of guilt since in the first or second grade I had stolen a copy of Howard Pyle's *Book of Pirates* from it which I did not steal back into it until the sixth grade (during the intervening years it lay dusty and unread in a witch's attic of our house where I had hidden it, my own secret Scarlet Letter).

The Hilton Branch was about three miles from our house. It was the one place in early life I had to walk a long distance to because no bus line ran there. The trip was a perilous one but I took it usually every other Saturday from first grade on up. The principal danger I had to pass the first third of the journey was Red Hollender, a hard,
puffy, red-haired boy always bigger than I, who, when I passed his house, would dash out
and bang my arm with his big red freckled fist in a way that I could feel his knuckles
knock the bone of my thin arm - the left arm usually. Sometimes for variety he would
knee me (he had fat hard knees) in the thigh and then I would have to walk the rest of the
way like a crab, shuffling sideways. I could not hit him back because I carried books.

At the deadly center of my quest was "Fred's Candy Shop." Fred's real name was
Fritz and during the Second World War (the era I am now writing about) he was a spy for
the Germans. He had a wireless radio in the back of his store that he would use to send
messages back to Germany on, about troop concentrations in Maplewood and convoys
that gathered in that town which was about twenty miles inland from Newark, New
Jersey. From various "Bowery Boys" films that we had seen we knew it was our patriotic
obligation to steal candy from Fred-Fritz, and I was terrified of stealing. In fact, I never
stole from him, but once I yelled as I ran puffing by his storefront "Fritz, Fritz, kartoffel-
schnitt" which my German Grandmother told me was a terrible imprecation in the
Fatherland. I think it meant something like "Fred, Fred, potato-cutter," or maybe "potato-
peelings." Either way, it was a risky thing for me to do.

The last third of my trip was actually the most hazardous, because I had to walk
(running would have attracted attention) between the car-barns on my left where a
transport company stored old buses and trolleys and where red-eyed bums slept or
hunted among the weeds for dandelions to make wine with and where they occasionally
lured or entrapped little boys to engage in unspeakable (and at my age unimaginable)
practices, and on my right the even more mysterious Ward's Home, a red brick,
turreted, Gothic castle perched high behind trees atop a long and broad and swooping lawn, immaculately green and close-cropped in
the summer and muffled in thick unbroken virgin crests of snow most of the winter. Our
boyhood dream was to tumble down the grassy slope in summer or better still sleighride
down it in winter, but no one I knew ever even touched the land at the Ward's Home
because it loomed behind a spiked steel fence and was, we all knew, patrolled at night by
ravenous gigantic dogs (huge bloodhounds and crazed German Shepherds) with blood
red fire glowing from their eyes and long loops of venomous slaver dangling from their
crusted lips and yellowed teeth, who bounded in great Baskervillian leaps over the lawn
as soon as any child put foot on it, from misty dawn through fog shrouded night, guarding
the inviolable terrain of the Ward's Home. I believe the place was a rest home for rich old
people.

Finally I would arrive at the end of my trip. The library was on the second floor of a
curiously shaped building that looked like a triangle but wasn't. The first side you
encountered was flat cement veined with ivy. Then you turned a corner and found the
opening of a fire station. The first floor of the library was a fire station and if you looked
quickly inside (pretending to stare straight ahead of course) as you passed you might see
firemen IN RED SUSPENDERS! playing cards and waiting for a fire. The fire would

Decorative covers like these add a touch of graphic interest to many 19th Century playscripts.
occur just as you passed the open door and you would be crushed under the wheels of the beautiful red fire truck. And yes, there was a pole that led straight up to... to where Miss Heatherington sat, and one day, she would come sliding down that pole.

After you had waited just a split second to make sure this wasn't the day, you turned another corner, opened a door, and started walking upstairs. Immediately after you closed the downstairs door to the street you were surrounded by silence. Oh the steps creaked a bit but it was as though the creaks were wrapped tightly in cloth, and already you could smell the thick, papery smell of the library books and in your ears you could hear the silent sounds of the books on the shelves, packed tight, the squat books with thick pages and big print smelling the heaviest and sounding the densest. Atop the steps and through another door with a pressed air mechanism that gasped as you let the door swing slowly closed and then suddenly at the last moment shoved the door, if you didn't know any better, bang against the doorjam rattling the door's glass panels, right there smack at the entrance to the library sat Miss Heatherington, my first librarian. She was over thirty and under a hundred and twenty years of age, plump as a frog and cheery faced with jaws like an English bulldog, and her laugh was a cross between a wheeze and a rattle: we called it her wheezle. She had developed that laugh through years of suppressing it in the silence of the library. From her sturdy belly up through her ample rib cage and capacious (the only right word) chest some tremendous sound threatened to force its way like lava erupting up through Vesuvian craters, like an exploding "Old Faithful" geyser of Krakatoan propulsion. But somewhere wrapped around her wobbly dewlapped throat a pneumatic silencer throttled all audible sound, leaving only a virtually soundless but felt gasp to burst rattling forth like a bubble, like one of Keats' unheard but sweetest melodies.

Miss Heatherington never selected books for me, though she would tell me what was in each section. She was strict, no one to fool with. When I first walked to the library I was in the first grade and she would not let me take out a card because I did not know my telephone number. Chagrined, I walked home, had my mother write it down for me (it did not occur to me to use the telephone book, and I faintly recollect not being at the time able to write numbers very well, certainly not out of my head) then secreted the wadded paper in my mouth and walked back to the library, where I hid behind a stack and copied down the telephone number on my application card. South Orange 2-8672, Miss Heatherington. I still remember.

It seems to me in no time at all I was reading James T. Farrell's _Studs Lonigan_, Erskine Caldwell's _God's Little Acre_, and page 89 of John O'Hara's _A Rage to Live_. Also Dr. Doolittle's adventures and Harold Tunis sports books. I guess my all-time favorites were page 89 of _A Rage to Life_ and stories about life at the Smiling Pond where Old Mother West Wind ruled over Reddy Fox, Jerry Muskrat, and all the Little Breezes. Thus, I was fully prepared for _Fear of Flying_ but not for Tennyson's concept of nature, "Red in tooth and claw." And it is not true that like Grandfather Frog, I like "foolish green flies."

Miss Heatherington made me feel welcome, made me feel at home in the library, followed my reading progress over the years, always seemed interested in me and what I was thinking as long as I thought quietly. She never charged me for an overdue book. She made me love that library, and I have loved good, helpful librarians ever since.

Since I have been at the University of South Florida, the librarians there have aided
me in many ways, getting me books, directing me to resources, setting up exhibits for me, acting in a friendly fashion. Many of the workers really seem to appreciate books and how a person can enrich their life with them. At one university where I taught the librarian removed a magazine article I had written that he thought offensive to the university. Here at the University of South Florida, back at our beginning when cracker politicians launched a vicious attack upon our freedom of thought, the Library and its then chief, Elliot Hardaway, were among the first agencies of the University openly to ridicule such virulent small mindedness. In Miami I had to use a library where the staff felt its function was to protect the books from the people. The staff here seems to know that a library is a place where people and books get to meet and know each other. One librarian here directed me to some manuscript material that I have found very interesting, that I hope to write my next book about. A librarian, I discovered, has bought books and donated them to the library.

So, I figured it was time to give my small, inherited collection a proper, permanent, and hospitable home. So endeth this tale.
A letter from a patron

THE following letter is an excellent example of the kind of communication we are so pleased to receive in Special Collections. It is our pleasure to be able to cater to your interests and scholarly pursuits; it certainly gratifies us to hear that our patrons have found our collections useful. With Mrs. Smith's permission, we take the liberty of reproducing her letter here:

"Can you ever pick up a dictionary or encyclopedia and look up just the word that sent you there? My eyes always wander up and down the page and I usually have to tear myself away to keep from spending far too much time at one simple task.

"This happened to me on a grand scale at the USF Library in Tampa recently. While researching for records of Florida plantation life in the early 19th Century, I found a reference to Mark Catesby's two volumes about Virginia, Carolinas, and Florida.

"When the librarian brought out two huge leather-bound 18th Century volumes, staggering under their weight, I asked her 'What on earth are those?' She replied, 'They're the Catesbys that you asked about.'

"The remainder of my day was spent lost in these volumes of beauty and specific information. Mark Catesby sketched, painted and wrote about everything he saw in the South of 1714. His excellent descriptions of the Indians transport the reader back over 200 years in time. His life-like art work includes everything from Magnolia grandiflora to the lowly mole cricket (not changed one whit today). His realistic style made the birds' feathers appear soft to the touch.

"As I carefully, reverently handled these beautiful volumes, published in 1754, I felt indeed privileged to have the opportunity to view the 18th Century through the eyes of this dedicated English naturalist."

-Mrs. Hugh E. Smith

The work Mrs. Smith refers to is our set of Catesby's magnificent Natural History of Carolina, Florida and the Bahama Islands. The set consists of two folio volumes, with well over two hundred hand-colored plates. One of the Library's outstanding treasures, our Catesby forms part of the University's rare books collection. We invite interested persons to visit the Special Collections department, where the Catesby may be examined firsthand. Our thanks to Mrs. Smith for her gratifying letter.
Any person who wishes to help in furthering the goals of the USF Library Associates is eligible to become a member. Regular, sustaining, patron, corporate, and student memberships are available on an annual basis (September 1 to August 31). Student memberships are open only to regularly enrolled students of the University of South Florida, and are valid only so long as the member remains a regular USF student. Life memberships are also available to interested persons.

Membership in the Associates includes a subscription to *Ex Libris*, a journal of articles and news about Associates activities, library developments, and other topics likely to be of interest to Bay area bibliophiles. The member is also entitled to attend all Associates functions and, in addition, is eligible for book loan privileges at the University Library, subject to prevailing library regulations.

So, if you are interested in helping us to obtain a better library for the University and its community, and want to participate in the many services and activities offered to members by the Library Associates, please use the membership blank below and become one of us today.