

BOOKS AT BROWN

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THEN—AND NOW

When John Freshman came to Brown in the latter years of the eighteenth century, he had to "pay to the Steward eight dollars in advance towards defraying his four first quarter-bills" and "give bond . . . in the sum of one hundred ounces of silver" that his other bills would be met. This bond was not to be delivered up "until the scholar bring a printed certificate from the Steward that he has discharged all College dues; and also a printed certificate from the Librarian that said scholar has complied with the laws respecting the use and damages of the library."

John could not plead ignorance. As soon as he had made his down payment and put up his bond, he had to buy a copy of the laws and carry it to the President, who signed the order "affixed to these laws" that admitted John to the college community. With his Freshman Bible thus authenticated, he could have a chamber assigned to him in the College Edifice and partake of any instruction afforded him by the officers of the College, but if John expected to use the library, he was promptly disillusioned. Books were far too precious to entrust to freshmen. The laws adopted by the Corporation of Rhode Island College in 1792 show how carefully the little library was guarded.

"The Librarian shall open the library every Friday and Saturday, at such hours as the President shall direct.

"The students shall come to the library four at a time, when sent for by the Librarian; and they shall not enter the Library beyond the Librarian's table, on the penalty of three pence for every offence.

"All the students shall be entitled to the use of the Library, except the freshman class; for which each student so entitled shall pay four shillings and six pence per quarter, to be charged in the quarter-bills.

"Every book taken from the Library shall be well covered with clean thick paper; and if any student shall injure the covering of the book he takes from the library, by writing upon it or otherwise, he shall be fined at the discretion of the Librarian.

"No student shall be allowed to take out, or have in his possession at one time, without special liberty from the President, more than one folio, which he may keep six weeks; or one quarto, which he may keep four weeks; or one octavo, which he may keep three weeks; or two duodecimos, which he may keep two weeks.

"No student shall behave in a disorderly manner, while receiving books, nor take down any book from the shelf.

"No academical exercises shall be performed in the library, nor shall lamp or candle ever be carried into it.

"All students are forbidden at any time to enter the Library, on the penalty of a fine, not less than three shillings, nor more than twelve."

Perhaps this care is partially responsible for the fact that few American colleges retain so great a portion of their pre-Revolutionary libraries as Brown, but her freedom from disastrous fires is doubtless an even greater factor. The books preserved in the Brown Library from colonial times have been taken from the stacks and placed in separate cases. They make a brave show, with their stout leather and vellum bindings, but their content would attract few modern readers.

How different it is now! Not one of the laws of 1792 is in effect today, although the Dean might frown on a student who behaved in a disorderly manner while receiving books. At an early meeting of the Friends of the Library, President Wriston expressed the present attitude of the Corporation and Faculty.

"The library is the heart of the University—indeed, without it the University could not exist. I might even say that the library is more important than the faculty, for an earnest student can get an education from books. The members of the faculty are the intermediaries. It is their task to see that the student and the books get together.

"The easy way to do this is to write a textbook. A textbook, you know, is an instructor's attempt to make learning simple. Its purpose is to hand out knowledge in easy doses. It should be a concentrated essence, but often the vital matter is lost in the distillation. The textbook becomes a barrier between the student and the book. It makes it unnecessary for him to seek out the true sources. I long for the time when we shall have no textbooks. Then the student must go to the books for knowledge.

"Every step that we take to bring the student to the book is a step in the right direction. I look forward to the day when all of the bars that stand between the student and the great thoughts of the past will be lowered. I suppose that we must always have catalogs and indexes, but I hope that the time will come when we may send the student directly to the stacks, with only the slightest genuflexion to the desk, so that he may see all that has been written on a subject. Then he will browse a bit, select the good grain from the chaff, and write his own bibliography. The better currency of literature and of scholarship will drive out the debased currency of the textbook."

FRIENDS INDEED!

The last number of *Books at Brown* listed some three thousand books that came to the Library through its Friends. We record with gratitude more recent gifts.

- From Dr. Harlan P. Abbott, '85. *Warner's Library of the World's Best Literature*, 30 volumes, and a set of Stoddard's travel lectures.
- From Professor James P. Adams. A number of *Current Economic Issues*, with a promise to supply future numbers regularly; the 1938 photograph of Faculty and Officers for the Archives Collection; and four other items.
- From Major Philip L. Alger. 3 volumes and 37 reprints from the *Proceedings of the United States Naval Institute*.
- From Professor Raymond C. Archibald. 24 books and pamphlets in the field of mathematics.
- From Mrs. Dwight K. Bartlett. An autographed letter and poem of Oliver Wendell Holmes, 1889, and an autographed poem of John Greenleaf Whittier, 1887.
- From Professor Leicester Bradner. 2 copies of his *The Growth of Wuthering Heights*.
- From Rabbi William G. Braude, A.M. '34. The first two numbers of a new magazine, *Contemporary Jewish Record*.
- From Mr. Herbert O. Brigham, '99n. The *Proceedings of the Special Libraries Association* for 1938.
- From Mr. Zechariah Chafee, '80. 17 books, including Van Paassen's *Days of our Years*, just published; and \$75.00 toward the compilation of an Alumni Bibliography.
- From Mrs. J. Francis A. Clark. 21 letters written by John Hay from 1865 to 1900 to Mr. and Mrs. John Bigelow.
- From Mr. Eugene A. Claus. Another in the series of his finely printed histories of Providence libraries—*Brown University Library 1767-1782*, by Dr. Van Hoesen.
- From Professor S. Foster Damon. A letter and half a dozen ephemeral items for the Archives Collection; 14 volumes of poetry and literature.
- From Mr. Frederick A. Forbes, '38. Assistance in securing copies of "Abraham Lincoln by John Hay," a pamphlet distributed at the Brown Alumni Dinner in New York on February 6.
- From Rabbi M. Goldman. 4 books for the study of Hebrew.
- From Mr. Charles E. Goodspeed, A.M. '35. *Song Written by Jabez Collins on the Death of Judah Ward*, for the Harris Collection.
- From Mr. Edward R. Granniss, '24sp. 13 pamphlets on industrial safety, containing articles by him, for the Archives Collection.
- From Mr. Theodore Francis Green, '87. 2 articles and a picture for the Archives Collection, 3 poems for the Harris Collection, and 29 volumes of Hearings before a Sub-committee of the Commission on Education and Labor.
- From Mr. Alfred H. Gurney, '07. 3 items for the Harris Collection; 4 articles by Wyndham Hayward, '24, for the Archives Collection; and several copies of "Abraham Lincoln by John Hay," a facsimile of a letter by John Hay to William Henry Herndon.
- From Professor William T. Hastings, '03. An article in *The Colophon* for the Archives Collection, and a book on culture.
- From Mr. Charles E. Hughes, '81. Volume 100 of *World Affairs*, a continuation of his gift for several years.

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- From Dr. William Vail Kellen, '72. Several more volumes from subscriptions carried by him—Index of *The Times* and *American Journal of International Law*.
- From Mrs. Bella C. Landauer. A Commencement Week card for 1857 for the Archives Collection.
- From Mr. Grady McCarty Long. Volumes 9 and 10 of *Household Words*, a weekly journal conducted by Charles Dickens.
- From Mr. W. Easton Louttit, Jr., '25. 2 prints of Brown University and several other items for the Archives Collection; 2 manuscripts of James Mitchell Varnum, class of 1769; and \$75.00 toward the compilation of an Alumni Bibliography.
- From Mr. Albert E. Lownes, '20. Trevv's *Plantae selectae* . . . 1750, parts 1-6, a magnificent volume, and 26 items of plays and poetry, ranging in date from 1811 to 1930.
- From Mr. Wallace G. Maxon. 1200 postcards, chiefly views in the United States and Europe, for the postcard collection, and 14 volumes of history, travel and literature.
- From Dr. Albert D. Mead, A.M. '91. Lambert's *Guide to the Study of Histology and Microscopic Anatomy*.
- From Mrs. I. Harris Metcalf. 13 more volumes for the Isabel Harris Metcalf Collection of Peaceana.
- From Mr. and Mrs. Jesse H. Metcalf. 9 volumes of popular interest and about 125 magazines.
- From Mr. Carleton D. Morse, '13. *Posthumous Works of Kritiz Lember, or The Wonders of Animal Magnetism*, Boston, 1843.
- From Mr. Frederick S. Peck. 66 numbers of *Hubbard's Little Journeys*; a map of the State of New York, 1833; and 2 other items.
- From Mr. Karl D. Perkins. *Metallurgical Dialogue*, by Albert Sauveur.
- From Mr. Albert H. Poland, '09. 50 photographs of paintings and sculpture.
- From Dr. Otis E. Randall, '84. Volumes 3-13 of *Studies in the Social Significance of Adult Education in the United States*.
- From Dr. R. G. D. Richardson. 26 badges and other items once the property of Professor Nathaniel F. Davis, for the Archives Collection.
- From Mr. Henry S. Saunders. *Walt Whitman, Poet of Democracy*, by William Gay.
- From Mr. Albert L. Scott, '00. 2 books, of which he was the joint author, for the Archives Collection.
- From Mr. Henry D. Sharpe, '94. 4 popular books for the Library, and about 40 volumes for exchange purposes.
- From Professor J. D. Tamarkin. His *Theory of Abstract Spaces*.
- From Colonel G. A. Taylor, '01. Inscribed copies of three anthologies of verse, containing his poems, for the Harris Collection.
- From Mr. Benjamin F. Thurston, '80. A bound and inscribed copy of Guild's "History of Brown University" as it appeared in the *Providence Journal* for September 1, 1857.
- From Mr. James A. Tyson. The *Connecticut Mirror* for January 3, 1820, containing the Annual Song of the Carriers of the Connecticut Mirror.
- From President Henry M. Wriston. 75 items, including magazines, a broadside for the Archives Collection, a Newcomen Society publication, and a history of Goucher College.
- From Dr. Frederick R. Wulsin. Volumes 43-51 of the *Memoirs of the American Anthropological Association*, and *Library Catalogue* of the Nigerian Secretariat.

NO PATENT MEDICINES FOR SALE

Not all unsolicited testimonials go to patent medicines. Here is one that we found on the campus.

"When I came back to my desk last fall, I found a stack of books waiting for me—some that I had needed for years. Each one bore the bookplate of the Friends of the Library. It was one of the most stimulating experiences in the building up of our Department."

We hesitate to point the moral, but $1 + 2 = 3$.

1. A Professor knew what he needed and asked for it.
2. A Friend looked for something to do and found it.
3. Results: a delighted Professor and a happy Friend.

And the Moral? *Any book adds to the latent resources of the Library, but a wanted book is doubly welcome because it adds what Brown needs when Brown needs it.*

So many Friends have asked for a definite expression of the Library's lacunae that we list a few of them. If you can fill any of these gaps, you may be sure that it will satisfy a long-felt yearning and find prompt usefulness.

Folk songs are part of our heritage, but they represent an oral tradition and early manuscripts are of the utmost rarity. The 18th century notebook of Edmund Grandey of Panton, Vermont, contains 132 pages of the songs popular during the American Revolution. Some of them may be Grandey's own poems. They deal with events that he took part in as a soldier against Burgoyne. This notebook of unique and unpublished source material is offered to us for the Harris Collection at a special price of \$60.00.

An important first edition not in the Harris Collection is Longfellow's *The Belfry of Bruges*, Cambridge, 1846. A fine copy costs about \$50.00.

Herbert Norris's *Costume and Fashion* will be completed in six volumes. The four volumes published so far cost about £7.

The Indian Treaties printed by Benjamin Franklin, edited by Julian P. Boyd, have been reprinted by the Pennsylvania Historical Society, \$15.00.

Johannes Kepler's *Astronomia Nova*, published in Prague in 1609, is one of the great landmarks of science. We are asked to bid on a copy. Other important works in the history of science are Bretschneider's *History of European Botanical Discoveries in China*, 2 vols., London, 1898, and a recent facsimile of the great mediaeval manuscript *Herbal of Pseudo-Apuleius*, about \$36.00 and \$41.25 respectively.

For the Lincoln Collection there is *A Parallel between the Great Revolution in England of 1688 and the American Revolution of 1860-61*, by a Gentleman of Mississippi, published at Meridian, Mississippi, in 1864. It is a rare Confederate imprint, \$50.00. Tachy's *Abraham Lincoln*, Paris, n.d., gives the French view, \$25.00. Broad-sides are ephemeral. Recent offers include one from the first campaign, Boston, 1860; the first Inaugural Address, Chillicothe, March 5, 1861; and a poster offering \$30,000 Reward for the capture of John Wilkes Booth. Prices \$50.00 to \$150.00 each.

Art books are frequently too expensive for the ordinary library budget although they are necessary for that Department's progress. T. H. Fokker's *Roman Baroque Art*, 2 vols., at \$30.00, and *The Notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci*, edited by Edward MacCurdy, at \$15.75, are recent examples of important works regretfully passed by for lack of funds. They can still be bought if Friends will help.

A "salt-water university" ought to have all of the publications of the Marine Research Society of Salem, but Brown has less than a quarter of them.

The library of the future, no doubt, will keep many records in microfilm. This is a tiny photograph of a whole page or document on motion picture film, read with special devices. It runs about 32 pages to the foot and costs about five cents a foot. It is inexpensive and easily housed. Microfilm is in use today in the Library and on the campus. The University of Illinois suggests that we co-operate in filming the *Sessional Papers* of the British House of Commons, which we suppose corresponds to our *Senate and House Documents*—nothing to pick up for light reading, but an indispensable tool for research. During the 19th century, shades of Gladstone, 5811 volumes were issued, totalling over 4,000,000 pages, so that even at five cents a foot, the cost would be nearly \$6,500. On microfilm this would occupy about twenty feet of shelf room, so it will not be necessary to add a new wing to the Library. Fortunately, we can report that no professor is pining away for lack of the *Sessional Papers* just now, but the project is a worthy one. The immediate investment would be small, as it will take some years to complete the filming.

Lest we be accused of plutocratic leanings, we hasten to less astronomical figures. *Franciscan Studies* are scholarly monographs by members of the three Franciscan Orders. Subjects include American history, philosophy and history of science. Prices range from 25 cents to \$2.00, averaging about \$1.25.

Brown is proud of her sons and she should have all of their books. Not even the Harris Collection has the first book of verse by a Brown man—the *Poetical Essays* of Joseph Campbell, which was probably published in Providence in 1783. Norman M. Isham's *Early Rhode Island Houses*, Providence, 1895, is another book that we desire greatly. Still another is the monumental *Survey of Persian Art*, by Arthur Upham Pope, which can be bought for \$200.00 today.

Even a librarian needs tools. One such tool is *English Book Prices Current*. The fifteen volumes from 1919 to 1933 are offered at \$75.00. In the same class are the publications of the Grolier Club and of other bookish societies. A recent volume is *One Hundred Years of Paper Making* by Clarence A. Wiswall and Eleanor Boit Crafts, privately printed in an edition of only 100 copies. \$5.00 will buy it.

A great many elusive works come into the market from time to time—old American plays for the Harris Collection, for example. The usual price is only a few dollars, but the acquisition of just such things goes far toward making any collection "great." Professor Damon will be glad to keep any Friend posted on the opportunities that come to him. So will the head or the librarian of your favorite department. Just ask them.

We hardly need to point out that prices quoted on old, rare and out-of-print books are necessarily approximate—when, as and if we can find them; subject to prior sale; and only one to a customer! It takes more than money to build a truly fine library, but a small fund ready for instant use when opportunity knocks is of immeasurable value.

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