



Special Collections Acquires Early Printed Virgil Books

We are pleased to report the acquisition of six folio editions of the poet Virgil (70-19 BCE), dated from 1470 to 1552. One of the most popular Roman poets from his own time to the present day, Virgil now takes a more notable place on our shelves alongside Ovid (43 BCE-17/18 CE), of whose works we hold one of the finest collections in the country. The author of the *Eclogues*, the *Georgics*, and the epic *Aeneid*, Virgil has been the object of scholarly attention for two millennia, and his works have been known and treasured by generations of Latin students. These rare volumes will provide classics scholars and students of book history many opportunities for hands-on study.

Prior to this acquisition, Special Collections held only ten editions of Virgil dated before 1800, the earliest printed in London in 1596. The newly acquired volumes attest to the great interest Renaissance scholars held in Virgil, and the value they placed in earlier Virgilian scholarship. The 1470 edition, printed by Ulrich Han in Rome, is the first printed edition of the commentary of Servius, whose fifth-century writing is the earliest extant scholarship on Virgil. One of only two known copies, this book is also the first to include, as part of the commentary, passages from Homer in a Greek typeface.

The second incunabulum (i.e., a book printed before 1501) in the collection was printed in 1492 by Anton Koberger of Nuremberg. Koberger is perhaps best known as the printer of the 1493 *Nuremberg Chronicle*, the heavily illustrated compilation of world history on the eve of Columbus's discovery of America. Five of the new books contain commentaries by both ancient and Renaissance scholars, and three of the later volumes are notable for their fine woodcuts.

The books are in remarkable condition, and they will serve as excellent examples of early printing and bookbinding for our book history students. One of the volumes is in its original full pigskin binding, and two volumes are in original quarter pigskin and wood bindings. The original metal clasps are intact on two volumes. For students, faculty, and visiting researchers, the opportunity to see, touch, and study these volumes in much the same condition as they were used 500 years ago adds greatly to their appeal.

The purchase of these wonderful books was made possible through a combination of sources. The Pease Classics funds—restricted Library endowments to be spent in support of Classics—contributed the bulk of the funding. They were supplemented by several other endowed funds, the Friends of Special Collections fund, and a contribution from UVM Classics Department faculty. We are grateful to all of the donors who have made this once-in-a-lifetime purchase possible.



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Fraser B. Drew and his Gifts to Special Collections

Since the founding of Special Collections more than fifty years ago, hundreds of people have donated money and materials to the Department, some very generously, but none as faithfully and consistently as Fraser Bragg Drew. The Buffalo State University English professor emeritus, a member of the UVM class of 1933, died on June 24, 2013, in Buffalo a day after celebrating his 100th birthday. Readers of *Liber* will recall our frequent notices about his gifts as well as his occasional reminiscences of college days and the literary life. We are deeply saddened by his passing, as are generations of his students, colleagues, and friends of literature in this country and abroad.

Beyond our memories of this gracious and erudite gentleman, we have the consolation of his gifts, which will enlighten and entertain scholars and aficionados into the future. Fraser Drew began his discussions with UVM librarians about possible donations as early as 1962, the year that Special Collections opened its doors. At that time, we had few significant literary manuscript collections, other than the papers of Dorothy Canfield Fisher, and almost no collectible editions of modern literature. First editions by notable authors could be found in the general stacks—but stripped of their dust jackets, plastered with “due date” slips and charge-slip pockets, and heavily stamped with the UVM Libraries stamp. Fraser Drew effectively established our collection of significant editions of modern literature, and it has grown exponentially through gifts and purchases to the present day.

Professor Drew made the first of his twenty-five major gifts to Special Collections in 1969. An admirer of the prolific English novelist and poet laureate John Masfield (1878-1967), Drew collected his works comprehensively and presented us with 294 editions in December 1969. This initial gift also included works about Masfield, articles, clippings, photographs, and 57 letters from Masfield to poet Louise Townsend Nicholl (1890-1981). Given in memory of Gladys Gleason Brooks and Lester Marsh Prindle, it is most likely the finest Masfield collection on this continent. Over the next two decades, Special Collections heads John Buechler and Connell Gallagher corresponded with booksellers and other Masfield collectors and acquaintances to fill the few gaps in the collection.

More gifts soon followed, many related to Masfield and his generation: books by Rupert Brooke, books and letters of Edna St. Vincent Millay, works of William Butler Yeats and his artist brother Jack. Among these were many exceedingly rare editions, such as the first printing of T. S. Eliot’s first book, *Prufrock* (1917). In 1995, Professor Drew presented us with more than 1,000 letters from Louise Townsend Nicholl, some containing

her original poems before revision and publication. As a young journalist in New York in 1916, Nicholl had interviewed Masfield and subsequently began a long friendship with him. Her correspondence with Drew, dating from 1949 to 1978, provides great insights on Masfield and many other literary figures of the twentieth century.

A series of gifts in the 1990s and 2000s established a fine collection of Robinson Jeffers books, manuscripts, and memorabilia. Drew’s extensive correspondence with Jeffers’s sister-in-law, Violet Call Hinkley, son Donnan, and others, gives an unusual perspective on the work of the much admired California poet. This is a tremendous resource for anyone who wishes to understand Jeffers and his influence on American life and letters.

In the last years of his life, Fraser Drew donated many of the books that were clearly his personal favorites, including fine first editions of John Steinbeck’s *The Grapes of Wrath*, Hart Crane’s *White Buildings* and *The Bridge*, Thornton Wilder’s *The Cabala*, Robert Frost’s *A Boy’s Will* and *Mountain Interval*, T. S. Eliot’s *Sweeney Agonistes*, William Butler Yeats’s *The Wanderings of Oisín and Other Poems*, and many more. These treasures, no less than all the others that he bestowed upon us over the last forty-five years, speak to Fraser Drew’s enormous spirit of generosity and his deep love for the University of Vermont. We are humbled and grateful.

To all those who knew Fraser Drew, and especially to his companion of fifty-seven years, James A. Brophy Jr., we offer condolences, and this reflection: that a life full of great books is a life well-lived.



Fraser Drew (left) received a medal emblematic of the first State University of New York Distinguished Teaching Professorship from Chancellor Ernest L. Boyer (right) in 1973.

Sylvia Bugbee Retires

The UVM Libraries recently bade farewell to Sylvia Bugbee, who retired from her job as University Archives assistant and reference specialist at the end of January. For fifteen years Sylvia split her time between the Archives, located in the Library Research Annex on the eastern edge of campus, and Special Collections, where she provided reference service and oversaw our Vermont subject information files.

Although she has always had an interest in history, Sylvia's first career was in biological sciences. Raised in White River Junction, Vermont, she graduated from UVM in 1963 with a degree in Zoology. She then took a postgraduate course at the Institute of Genetics at the University of Edinburgh, followed by employment at a biological research lab in Bar Harbor, Maine, where scientists were conducting research on animal behavior.

In 1966, Sylvia entered the Peace Corps, serving a term in Thailand as a public health educator. It was a difficult assignment, but one with many bright moments. In retrospect, Sylvia recently reflected, she felt she was changed by the experience more than she had brought about change through her service.



Sylvia (upper right) in Thailand, 1967.

Back in the U.S., Sylvia pursued a career as a research laboratory technician, eventually returning to Vermont in 1981. Lab work was interesting, but soon she could deny her interest in history no longer: in 1988 she entered the history master's degree program at UVM. She studied social history under the direction of Professor Constance McGovern. Her thesis, "A Society of Continuance: The Role Played by Kinship and Neighborhood in the Settlement of an Early New England Town," examined the migration of people belonging to well-developed kinship and social networks from England to Roxbury, Massachusetts.

In the course of her graduate work, Sylvia became a familiar face in Special Collections. She undertook an Archives Practicum, gaining hands-on experience with archival theory and practice, in addition to her research. Sylvia undertook additional graduate work at the University of Colorado, Boulder, in the mid-90s. When

the Archives Assistant position opened up at UVM in 1998, she was well prepared to take the job.



During her career in Special Collections, Sylvia assisted researchers from a wide variety of backgrounds on innumerable topics. She was the specialist for UVM's official records in the Archives, and was the key contact for administrative offices wishing to send records to the Archives. Her expertise in Vermont history, women's history, and genealogy were especially valued by researchers and staff. Sylvia is a scholar in her own right, of course. She edited *An Officer and a Lady: The World War II Letters of Lt. Col. Betty Bandel*, documenting the pioneering military career of the late UVM English professor Betty Bandel. Sylvia continues to be heavily involved in local history, and currently serves as publications chair and awards chair for the Chittenden County Historical Society.

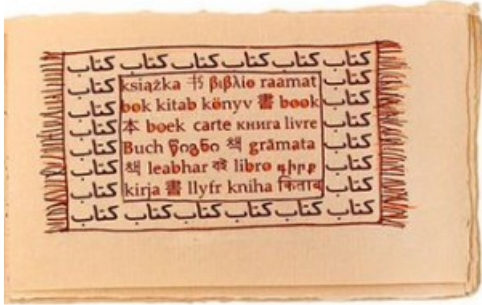
Special Collections "has always felt like home," Sylvia recently said. We hope it will ever be so, and wish her all the best in retirement.

More Staff News

Last fall, we were pleased to host a Simmons College library school intern, Erin Doyle, who worked on a number of manuscript projects with Chris Burns. Erin graduated with a master's degree in Library and Information Science in December, and we were so impressed with her work that we offered her a temporary job as Consuelo Northrop Bailey Archivist, funded by the Bailey endowment fund. She accepted, and is now fully engaged in manuscript work.

Meanwhile, Chris Burns has assumed the role of University Archivist, combining that title with Curator of Manuscripts. We plan to make great strides in organizing, describing, and cataloging Archives materials and historical manuscripts, and Chris brings considerable expertise to the effort.

An Inventory of Al-Mutanabbi Street



Beata Wehr's pamphlet, *Al-Mutanabbi Street*

UVM Special Collections librarians first learned about An Inventory of Al-Mutanabbi Street when Bill and Vicky Stewart from Vamp and Tramp showed us Emily Martin's *Not a Straight Line*, which she made for the Al-Mutanabbi Street Artists' Book Project.

In March 2007, a car bomb exploded on Baghdad's "Street of Booksellers." The winding street, named after a tenth-century Arab poet, al-Mutanabbi, was filled with bookstores and stalls, cafes and gathering places, and it

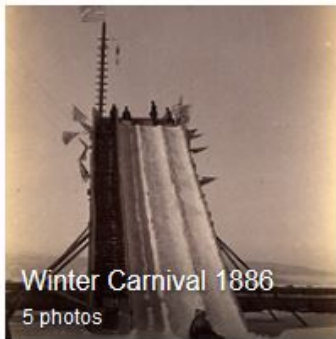
was regarded as an important center of the city's intellectual community. Sadly, many booksellers were killed and wounded, and stores and stalls were destroyed.

In 2010, the Al-Mutanabbi Street Coalition called on book artists to "reassemble" the inventory of lost reading. The coalition asked artists to create books "that reflected both the strength and fragility of books, but also showed the endurance of the ideas within them." Artists from around the world have donated over 260 books to the project. One complete set of the books will be donated to the Iraq National Library in Baghdad, and others are being exhibited in the United States and Europe.

So far, Special Collections has acquired books created for the project by Lynn Avadenka, Julie Chen, Maureen Cummins and Tona Wilson, Francis Jetter, Christine Kermaire, Emily Martin, Mary McCarthy and Shirley Veneema, Suzanne Sawyer, and Beata Wehr. In this powerful collection, the artists reflect on the horror of the attack and the loss of books, but also demonstrate the power and persistence of books and words.

Visit us on Flickr.

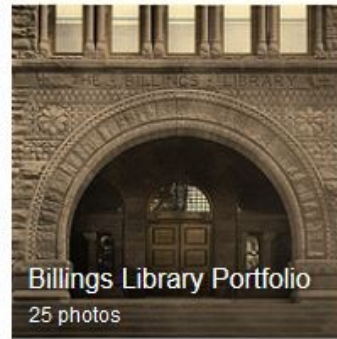
Special Collections has started sharing photographs and other images on Flickr. You can look at our photo sets here: <http://tinyurl.com/uvm-sc-photos>



Winter Carnival 1886
5 photos



Williams and Converse
15 photos



Billings Library Portfolio
25 photos



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