

A few more acquisitions

These then to add to the shelves since the September 2013 issue of *Endpapers*:

(1) Mosher had a few connections to folks of the American magazine, the *Ladies Home Journal*. He knew its publisher, Cyrus H. K. (Hermann Kotschmar) Curtis (1850-1933) of the Curtis Publishing Company. Curtis was born in Portland, Maine, and even though he eventually ended up in Philadelphia, he always maintained contact with his natal city. In 1912 Curtis donated the Kotschmar Memorial Organ to Portland in memory of his boyhood music teacher. There was a connection to Mosher as well. Curtis used to moor one of his yachts, either the *Machinonne* (built 1904) or the *Lyndonia* (built 1907), in Portland's harbor, aboard which Mosher was an invited guest. And yet another connection involves Mosher's first book, *Modern Love*, which was published in 1891. There were printed 400 numbered copies of the small paper version and 50 large paper copies. Copy #1 of the small paper copies was given to Mary Louise Curtis Bok, Cyrus Curtis's daughter who was married to Edward Bok, the editor of the *Ladies Home Journal*, autograph collector, and writer (*The Americanization of Edward Bok*, and *A Man from Maine* about Cyrus Curtis). This copy No. 1 with her bookplate is in the Bishop Collection. Now yet another connection to the *Ladies Home Journal*, albeit somewhat of a stretch, was added to the Mosher Collection.

Beth Ahearn Fisher (daughter of Allen & Patricia Ahearn of Quill & Brush) contacted me back in October about a copy of W. E. Henley's *Echoes of Life and Death* (Mosher, 1908) with a laid in letter (or possibly formerly bound in but now loose) to AMB (Ann Maria Batchelder, 1881-1955). A pencil note on the front pastedown indicates this A.L.S. is from the publisher to a woman who was to become a food columnist for the *Ladies' Home Journal*, only at this point in her life she was just 27 years old (so 26 years from the beginning of her *Ladies' Home Journal* days). On the accompanying insert is a penned ownership note, presumably in Batchelder's hand: "Ann M. Batchelder. / October Second - / Nineteen hundred eight. / from Thomas B. Mosher" followed by a four line quote from Henley's poem, "Invictus": "It matters not how strait the gate, / How charged with punishment the scroll: / I am the master of my fate. / I am the Captain of my soul!" / Henley." (punctuation differs from Henley's). Inside this bi-fold sheet Mosher had written: "My dear AMB: Judged by large sales Henley was a failure! But -- do you or I measure one's poetry by its sale? If so Tupper heads the list, and Swinburne is nowhere! Yours sincerely T B Mosher October 2/08". The book also contains a hand-drawn mysterious symbol used several times (a triangle with a T written inside it) and marks at different poems and passages, and the initials M.E.T. to the poem XIII on p. 17 with the poem beginning "Bring her again, O western wind,..."

After working for the *Delineator Magazine* (from 1928-1934) Ann

Batchelder became a popular food columnist and associate editor with the *Ladies' Home Journal* starting in 1934. She hailed from Vermont and was a self-described adventurer. She was also active in women's suffrage work and was known as a lover of books. Obviously, her contact with Mosher and the Mosher Press was long before her career as a columnist, author and editor.

(2) September 24, 2013 - Received a copy of Gordon Bottomley's *A Vision of Giorgione—Three Variations on Venetian Themes* (Mosher, 1910). This Bottomley book is inscribed by the Scottish playwright, Gordon Bottomley, "To Frank D. Clewlow, with kindest regards, from Gordon Bottomley. March 21st, 1916" (Frank D. Clewlow, actor, director, producer, 1887-1957). At that time Clewlow was with the Birmingham Repertory Theatre where he was appointed by Barry Jackson as actor-producer with his newly-formed Birmingham Repertory Company (1913-1918), performing in 76 theatre productions. He had just finished a run of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* (March 11-17, 1916) and was in preparation for Ben Johnson's *The Alchemist* (April 8-15, 1916). Clewlow later went to Australia in 1926 and in 1936 he became the Director of Drama and Features, then later as National Director of Productions for the Australian Broadcasting Commission.

(3) Acquired a book from the Vest Pocket Series, this being a copy of *A Little Book of Nature Themes* from Henry D. Thoreau, selected by Thomas Coke Watkins (Mosher, 1906). Yes, the regular edition with paper wrappers, the Japan vellum version, and the version bound in cloth were already present in the collection, but this newly added one was bound for the Mosher Press in gilt-decorated limp leather with the protective glassine still intact. They are rather difficult to find in reasonably good condition, and nearly impossible to get in this fine a condition.

(4) Dick Lowenstein of Westport, Connecticut again contacted me about a book from Mosher's library he wanted to sell: *The Collected Poems of Rupert Brooke* (New York: John Lane, 1915. First edition; second thousand). I had bought several Mosher *Ex Libris* books from Dick before, and this was offered as an apparent "last find" from his own collections (but who can tell—Dick's holdings are substantial). The most important thing about this copy is that it comes with a printed slip:

Compliments of John Lane Company
The Bodley Head
116-120 West 32nd Street New York

I rather like that in that it helps to show the ongoing good relations between John Lane and Mosher, and so I bought the book for the collection.

(5) On yet another front, a book from Mosher's library entered the fold, this being Edward Thomas's *Maurice Maeterlinck* (London: Methuen and Co., 1911). Mosher published very little by Maeterlinck, but obviously liked the author's work. Mosher did have this title in his library according to a manuscript listing I have of the books in Mosher's library written out by Oliver Sheehan. The two more important writers on Maeterlinck, at least for Mosher (and hence for me), were Arthur Symons and John Mackail, both of whom Mosher utilizes in his October 1908 issue of *The Bibelot*. Edward Thomas receives no mention.

Since I have hundreds of books from Mosher's library, I have come to settle

on mostly seeking books that have had some recorded influence on Mosher or which were used by him for one of his book reprints or *Bibelot* issues; however, I've always reserved my own self-permission to acquire others if inexpensive. So in short, if the book is attractively priced I buy it, but if high priced I pass it by if it didn't seem to have any impact on Mosher other than his having it in his personal library. At first the gentleman offering me this book was unsure at what price to sell it, and contemplated the possibility of auction. I gave him my thoughts as I explained above, and in a few days an offer came back attractively priced and hence it's now part of the collection. There is one thing about the book, however, which is sort of its saving grace for me. It's loaded with pictures of Maeterlinck, and pictures of an author or correspondent were important to Mosher if for no other reason than his feeling a greater affinity with the writer.

I acquired that copy of *Maurice Maeterlinck* from Bobby McFarland, an outstanding collector of Frederick Rolfe, a.k.a. Baron Corvo. Bobby McFarland presently has one of the largest and most interesting Corvo collections outside of those at Leeds University and Columbia University.

The book's offering to me sparked a spirited correspondence between us two collectors, and I became enchanted by the "secretive collecting" that seems to be part and parcel of many Corvo collectors. McFarland noted that "everything to do with Corvo has always been secretive. Few collectors will even tell you what they own. I don't know why but that's the way it is," not to mention just how bizarre Baron Corvo's story seems to be. I've never bumped into such before.

We touched upon John Lane who published Corvo's second book—the Bodley Head Booklet #6; Lane's partner, Elkin Matthews; Corvo's quarrels with Grant Richards, especially over the printing of the *Chronicles of the House of Borgia* published by Richards in 1901 (Grant Richards was a defender of T. B. Mosher); other Corvo collectors the world over; and the passion that has propelled us both into assembling notable, even world-class collections; and the differences between "collectors" vs. "Collectors" with a capital C. Another thing I noticed is that for us, all roads eventually lead back to the subject of our collecting passion—for McFarland his Corvo, and for me ol' Moshwig. For example, I mentioned some limericks Dick Fredeman wrote about me during the period of time I was writing the Mosher bio-bibliography, to which McFarland replied: "They are very clever. I particularly enjoyed the rhyming of hyssop with Bishop. E.F. Benson wrote a book titled *Scarlet and Hyssop*. Why would I know that? E.F. was the brother of Robert Hugh who collaborated briefly with Corvo in the writing of one of his books. Corvo, of course, insisted he did all the work and he probably did. The Benson brothers are quite interesting in and of themselves." So hyssop sparked thoughts of E. F. Benson who, in turn reminded McFarland of Robert Hugh, and then McFarland associated the collaboration of Hugh with Corvo. It takes one to know one, and I understand this constant focus on the subject of one's collecting passion and how we seem to be able to associate all manner of things to our central subject.

Whenever I mentioned something about another Corvo collector I stumbled upon on the Internet, McFarland either knew him well, or had some association—like how he found himself the dedicatee of one of the "Raven" monographs assembled by an Australian Corvo expert. We also got on the topic of collection comparison meaning answering the question "how does my

own collection stack up against the other known collections?" We also wrote to one another about some of the unique material in our respective collections. Imagine, all this was all prompted by his offer to sell me that copy of Thomas's *Maurice Maeterlinck* with Mosher's bookplate.

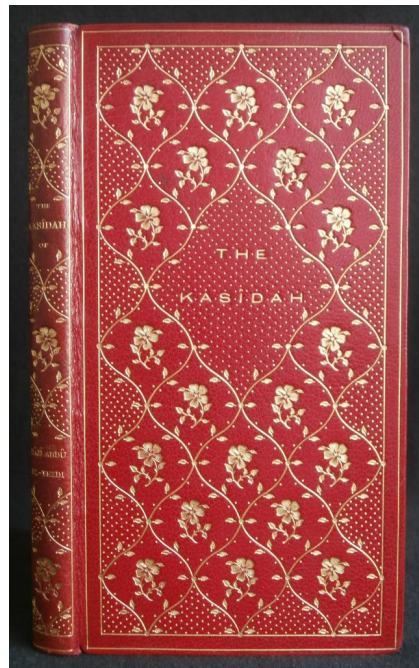


(6) Another acquisition of note, about which I was going to write a separate essay but now decline to do so, was another binding. True, I already have a number of very nice Zaehnsdorf bindings in the collection, so why one more? Part of the reason lies in the fact that I had a lovely one in red leather on a Mosher book which I regrettably sold to a bindings collector overseas. I've never forgiven myself for that, but I was backed into a financial corner at the time so reasoned that I wouldn't mind parting with it in lieu of the funds needed to keep going. I was wrong. So when this binding appeared on the market I snatched it up. The book is the first edition of the

Old World Series publication of *The Kasidah of Hâjî Abdû El-Yezî* translated and annotated by his Fiend and Pupil, F. B. [Sir Richard Francis Burton], Portland, Maine: Mosher, 1896. The book is bound in sumptuous red morocco by the Zaehnsdorf firm, with their hallmark oval seal indicating its quality, silk endpapers, and bearing a woman's bookplate with a CG monogram. According to the bookseller, the book came from the Graham family of Netherby Hall in England, and so the CG is presumed to be a member of that family.

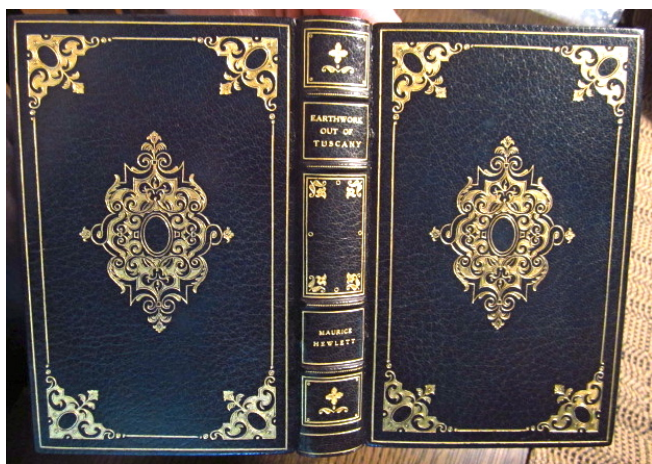
In style I would classify it along the lines of a classic Persian tapestry form (a good many oriental rugs carry the same basic design). I was particularly taken by the pointillism of the outer cover spaces which were reflected again in the inner lozenge containing the book's title. The back cover sparingly utilizes this arrangement only allowing for the greater part of the cover to contain unadorned space—the antithesis of the front cover.

The pointillism also lends a certain tactile feel to the covers, something of which I've experienced in other examples sporting a field of dots. The bookplate, surely feminine and with its lines from Handel's "Lascia la Spina, cogli la Rosa" (although with an additional word which puzzles me) carries the CG monogram, a stylized and clearer form of which was also seen on the front cover of the Old World *Shakespeare's Sonnets* (Mosher, 1901) which was also auctioned just before this volume, but which was far less interesting and which had the condition problem of a faded spine. Though it would have been nice to have them both, I had to select either one of the other and so bid low for the first and reserving a high bid for the second. The day after a bindings collector asked if



I was the one “who ended up winning this one?” (the *Kasîdah*) and added “if so, congrats! Just an absolutely fantastic binding.” Of course it was my pleasure to affirm that the book was on its way from England. Another friend, a bookbinder and conservator, emailed “sweet binding on the Burton, congrats. Isn’t it nice how they were able to give it such a Persian feel using standard Arts and Crafts tooling? Which says as much about the universality of ornament but still and all it’s a clever and lovely pattern.” His comments are spot on.

(7) Another binding was also secured, this coming from a dealer in Australia. The book is Maurice Hewlett’s *Earthwork out of Tuscany—Being Impressions and Translations* (Mosher, 1911) and richly bound in blue morocco with gilt decoration on both covers and spine. The dealer listed it as exhibiting “the elegance of a Stikeman classical binding matching Thomas



Mosher’s precise foreword to this edition of Hewlett’s vivid description of Tuscan life. Distinguished by the signatures in gilt capitals of BRENTANOS the bookseller and Sikeman and Co, the binder.” I made an offer for the book and along with my offer I indicated “if I would not find it satisfactory upon receipt, I would return it promptly at

my expense and also pay you for your postage. It's just one gentleman's offer to another gentleman, and I hope you do not find my offer insulting or disrespectful. Of course, you may freely say it's not to your liking, or entirely dismiss my offer without comment. Either way we simply part as friends of this ever diminishing "Republic of Booksellers and Collectors". He did respond and my offer was accepted.

(8) Another acquisition, but one sort of my own making, is *Yeats’s Mask--Yeats Annual No. 19: A Special Issue* (London: Open Book Publishers, 2013). I got both a hard- and soft-bound copy because they contain my article, “My Dear Miss Brachvogel... A Ms. Version of a Yeats Quatrain,” on pp. 339-349. Although the editors severely cut back on my original article, I still have them to thank for fostering its appearance, and the research piece now firmly affixes the importance of the W.B. Yeats quatrain written in the little Mosher book, *The Land of Heart’s Desire*. After all, the book has now been identified as one of only three known manuscript copies of a famous Yeats quatrain (famous at least to Yeats scholars and academics of 20th century literature), and since one of those copies has been relegated to “fair copy” status as per the reported research, the example in the Bishop Collection of the Mosher Press turns out to be only one of two known manuscript copies which date prior to the poem’s publication. The inscribed Mosher edition is also accompanied by a delightful 2 1/2 page letter from Yeats’s sister, Susan Mary (Lily) Yeats. The research and writing was all great fun and it was my pleasure to present the findings to the scholarly world based on material in the collection. I have placed the hard-

bound copy of the *Yeats Annual* in a makeshift solander case alongside the actual book and letter until I can have a fitting case made for the whole grouping. As for the article itself, I will post the final version on the Mosher Press Website and also include the version previously accepted so that readers may have access to all the footnotes I had supplied in addition to other information excised from the final version.

(9) Whilst on the topic of Yeats's *Land of Heart's Desire*, I also recently acquired a copy of the same Mosher book specially bound in contemporaneous leather in Arts & Crafts style with raised bands, but unadorned as far as any decorative tooling. Inside the little volume are mounted photographs of two people acting roles in Yeats's little play (one looking the part of a fairy), and displaying the costumes they wore to accompany their parts. It might be a homemade brew at best, or quite possibly it might be the record of a production performed at some place like Bryn Mawr. Whatever the case, it's somewhat charming even though far from what some people call "Bishop condition."

(10) Three of Mosher's earliest publications were in the English Reprint Series. There were small paper, numbered copies of each title, as well as 50 large paper copies (ten of which were printed on Japan vellum). The Mosher Collection contained examples of every title in every state except for one: Robert Bridges's *The Growth of Love* (Mosher, 1894). The Mosher Collection of this title included small paper copies and the very limited large paper copy printed on Japan vellum, but for some reason still lacked the large paper version printed on Van Gelder paper. No longer, and not only was this title added from Carlos Martinez of Bibliodisia Books of Chicago, IL, but it also included the extremely rare printed dust jacket.

(11) Lastly, the collection now contains an utterly delightful caricature of E. S. Willard (1853-1915), the British Shakespearean actor who collected T. B. Mosher's books printed on real vellum. He traveled to America in 1902 where, from Boston, he wrote to Mosher. There are six Willard-to-Mosher letters now housed at The Houghton Library at Harvard. Since there is an appreciable amount of other E.S. Willard material in the Mosher Collection, I decided to spring for this pen & ink and watercolor character of Willard "at the Garrick Theatre" signed and dated "Charles • Dawson / 1914". I presume this is the poster artist, book cover, and bookplate designer, Charles E. Dawson, but even if not, no matter. It's a cute caricature. As with the Emilie Grigsby portrait, I bought this to not only enhance this small sub-collection, but to use in an exhibition if I ever have one on Mosher.

In the collection there are several Mosher books printed on vellum that were from Willard's collection. One was gotten from Blackwell's Rare Books in Oxford, England: Oscar Wilde's *The Ballad of Reading Goal* (1904), copy No. 6 of 10 printed on Roman vellum, signed by the publisher and by Willard, and bound in full flexible vellum. Another is Rosamund Marriott Watson's *Tares: A Book of Verses*, 1906. Copy No. 6 of 7 copies, in sewn signatures ready for binding, in board case. Thirdly, there is Willard's copy of Arthur Symons's *Lyrics* (1903), copy No. 6 of 10 printed on Roman vellum and bound in full flexible vellum with title gilt-stamped on the spine and carrying the full signature of the actor/book collector.

There is also a copy of Edward Clodd's *Concerning a Pilgrimage is to the Grave of Edward Fitzgerald* (1902) inscribed by Mosher to Willard on Nov. 14, 1902 (Incidentally, I have Clodd's own copy inscribed to him by Mosher and with several other letters to Clodd in it). So I can easily envision a sub-station in an exhibition in which Mosher's books printed on vellum and the collectors thereof are discussed and portrayed. I think this caricature would nicely enliven the grouping.

There were numerous items which I considered but refused to purchase for the collection. Two extra-illustrated Mosher books were offered and I passed on them both because, in my estimation, they were inferior to some of the extra-illustrated material already in the collection and were priced too high in my estimation and confirmed by a couple of my colleagues. I also passed on several Mosher books in leather bindings which again, hopefully according to my better judgment, would not have added to the collection in any appreciable way. Likewise, I passed on several books from Mosher's library because their price was high and their value to the collection quite low. It's not that I'm getting snooty or anything of that sort. It's just that the holdings are already quite deep in those categories and just placing more material for the sake of its somehow involving Mosher isn't furthering the research or appreciative value of the collection.

Anyway, let's call it a wrap.

Philip R. Bishop
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