

# BOOKPLATES FOR BEGINNERS

BOOKS AT THE BEECHMERE



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# BOOKPLATES FOR BEGINNERS

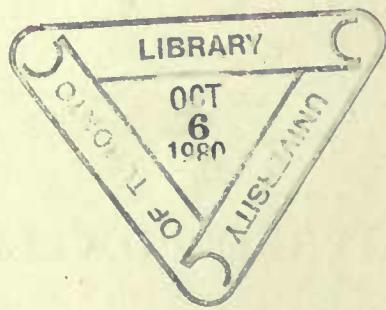
BY

ALFRED FOWLER



48336

ALFRED FOWLER  
KANSAS CITY  
MCMXXII



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TO MY WIFE  
WHO KNOWS THAT  
A HOBBY AFFORDS HEALTHFUL EXERCISE

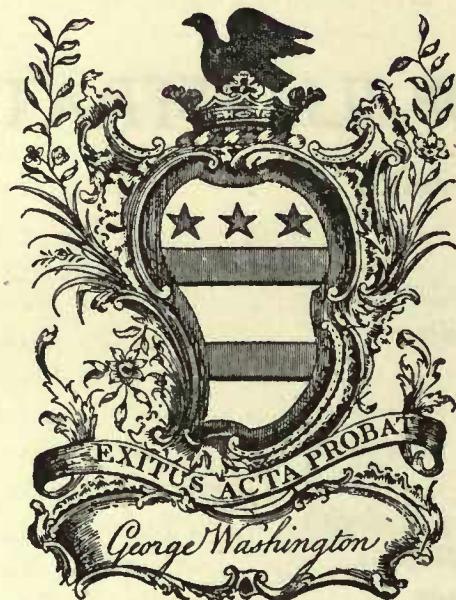
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The bookplate of *George Washington* is probably the most interesting American bookplate. It is of the style known as Chippendale armorial as determined by the shape and ornamentation of the shield and of the tablet on which the name is engraved. The shield and crest display the arms of the Washington family. The original is a copper-plate engraving, by an unknown artist who is thought to have been an American because of the manner of engraving.

## PREFACE

I have frequently been asked to suggest the title of a book which would serve to give the novice a general idea of the subject of bookplates. In the majority of cases, the long list of references to books dealing with special phases of the subject, which was forthcoming as the only answer to the question; frightened the beginner out of the notion of acquiring a knowledge of the subject. To meet this need for a book that will reward an hour or two of reading with a concise and reasonably comprehensive knowledge of the subject, *Bookplates for Beginners* has been written.

It has not been thought necessary to include a bibliography because bookplate bibliographies have appeared time and again and are accessible in almost every library. Allen's *American Bookplates* and Castle's *English Bookplates* both include comprehensive bibliographies, and the more recent book, *Some American College Bookplates*, includes an up-to-date and exhaustive bibliography of the subject by that indefatigable bibliographer of bookplates, Mr Winward Prescott. Textual mention of bookplate publications quotes the titles accurately and will serve to identify the books to booksellers.

I am sincerely grateful to Mr James Curle for permission to reproduce his beautiful bookplate by D. Y. Cameron, as frontispiece. The design is wrongly described in the catalogue of Mr Cameron's etchings, as the view actually represents the south transept of Melrose Abbey as it is seen from Mr Curle's house. D. Y. Cameron has etched a

number of fine bookplates but none of them equal Mr Curle's bookplate, in my humble opinion. I am also deeply grateful to the owners and artists of the other illustrations for lending the blocks for printing; and to my many friends for their kind assistance in supplying information to the end of making the book more accurate and comprehensive.

We who are enthusiastic about bookplates are occasionally accused of wasting our efforts on a trifling subject. Granted that the subject may not be of *vital* importance! Nor is any fine art vital, in a literal sense. But who will say that the fine arts are not mental recreations essential to that sanity of mind which is so vital to the progress of civilization? We do not harbor delusions regarding the importance of our subject. Whether we be owners, artists, or collectors of bookplates, we pursue our harmless pleasure for the wholesome joy we derive from it. Many pens are being wielded in less worthy causes.

And so I predict for you, gentle reader, many pleasant hours in the joyous and wholesome company of bookplates and books if, by my simple cunning, as Caxton would say, this unpretentious attempt to give you a briefly comprehensive survey of the subject should succeed in its object. And that object is simply to lead you to further research for yourself.

ALFRED FOWLER

17 Board of Trade,  
Kansas City, Mo., U. S. A.



The *Hilprand Brandenburg* is one of three German bookplates known to date from the 15th century. It bears the arms of its owner and is to be found in several old board-bound manuscripts from the Suabian monastery, where Brandenburg was a monk. Like many old engravings, the originals are printed on scraps of paper and the arms are crudely colored. The bookplate's authenticity has been established by inscriptions in the old volumes in which it has been found.

# I. BOOKPLATES IN THE BEGINNING

Time-honored custom seems to demand that elementary expositions of the nature and use of bookplates should open with an explanation of the early use of heraldry on bookplates. In olden times, the ability to read and write not being an accomplishment of the multitude, the bookowner would naturally choose an armorial achievement with which to mark his books because of the meaning it would convey to anyone who might find the book, whether he could read or not.

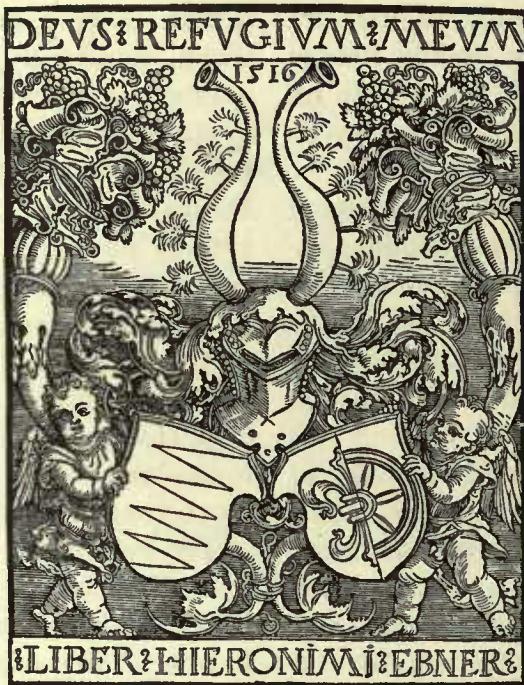
The bookplate, then, is simply a mark of possession that the booklover pastes in his books, usually on the inside of the front cover, to denote his ownership. I say *booklover* advisedly, because the casual possessor of a library rarely cares enough for his books to want to endow them with his name in this manner. On viewing a large collection of bookplates, one is led to the conclusion that the subject-matter for bookplates is unlimited. In early times we find heraldry predominating for the practical reason already mentioned; but more freedom was given the bookplate artist as learning became more widespread.

Gradually, the custom of ornamenting the shields of arms by adding rococo or Jacobean scrolls, or by adding mantling, came into use, and, a little later, we find personal symbols other than heraldry entering into bookplate design. Sometimes the heraldry was entirely superseded by such symbols where the love of books had spread to people not entitled to the use of armorial bearings or who considered other elements of

design more appropriate for the purpose. Then, gradually, the early conventional symbolism gave way to portraits, to decorative motifs, sometimes architectural or purely ornamental and sometimes such things as piles of books, or to landscapes or library interiors. Garden bookplates showing garden views are also frequently used with good effect. Indeed, there seems to be practically no limitation to the choice of bookplate motifs except good taste and that imposed by the small size of the ordinary bookplate; which exercises the artist's skill more than most of us realize.

The bookplate, or *ex-libris* if you choose, *ex-libris* being an adaptation from the Latin generally taken to mean 'from the books of,' is one of the simple joys of life. With it the booklover shows his affection for his books. The bookplate is, as a rule, an unobtrusive creature resting modestly within the covers of a book: there to be seen only by those in whom its owner has sufficient confidence to allow them to read his treasures. It frequently tells a story its owner considers too sacred for the public gaze and only to be related to friends with whom he would share his joys and sorrows.

For some time after the appearance of Lord de Tabley's pioneer book on bookplates, a bookplate found in an old book in the Carthusian monastery at Buxheim, in Suabia, was considered the oldest bookplate known. Copies of it were found in some old board-bound manuscripts which had been presented to the monastery by one Hilprand Brandenburg. The design depicts an



The earliest dated bookplate by Albrecht Dürer is the *Hieronimi Ebner* which bears the date 1516. The inscription *Liber Hieronimi Ebner* leaves no doubt as to its actually being a bookplate, as is the case with a number of old wood-engravings thought to be bookplates but which have not been found actually in use as such. This is one of the earliest dated bookplates.

angel with outspread wings carrying a shield charged with a device of an ox with a ring in his nose.

The authenticity of this bookplate is attested by manuscript notes found in the books containing the bookplate, which set forth details concerning the gift by Brandenburg. In a copy of *Quastiones super primo libro Sententiarum*, by (Saint) Bonaventura, this gift inscription reads, translated, 'This book belongs to the Carthusian Monastery of Buxheim, near Memmingen, and was given by Hilprand Brandenburg of Biberach.' The bookplate, with a similar inscription below it, has also recently been found in an old copy of *Sermones Dominicales*, by Antonius de Bitonto. Later on, similar inscriptions led to the discovery of two other bookplates, one found in an old Latin vocabulary which, it is thought, antedates the Brandenburg, and another found at Buxheim which is of about the same age as the Brandenburg. Both are heraldic, the first bearing a device of a hedge-hog holding a flower in its mouth, whilst the second is charged with the arms of one Wilhelm von Zell.

From the first we find famous artists interesting themselves in designing bookplates. Albrecht Dürer made an armorial design for Wilibald Pirckheimer, of Nuremberg, and Dürer's portrait of that worthy has also been found in use as a bookplate, entitling it to the distinction of being the first portrait bookplate; a variety dear to the hearts of many enthusiasts who treasure seeing a book's owner peering out genially at a fellow booklover, or glaring at the biblioclast. Other famous old artists who have made bookplates are Amman, Holbein, Cranach, Solis, Siebmacher, and Beham.

Thus we see that the bookplate is an old institution, having been originally used to mark the gift and ownership of manuscript

books in Germany about 1480. The earliest English bookplate dates circa 1520, the earliest French design circa 1574, whilst in Sweden the date is circa 1575, in Switzerland circa 1607, and in Italy circa 1623. America is not far behind with the *Steven Day* label dated 1642. One of the sixteenth century English bookplates was made for no less a personage than Sir Nicholas Bacon, the father of Sir Francis Bacon.

We repeatedly find important names connected with the history of bookplates as time goes on. What is believed to be the first mention of this subject in English literature is where that beloved old gossip, Samuel Pepys, writing on July twenty-first, 1668, says, 'Went to my plate-maker's, and there spent an hour about contriving my little plates, for my books of the King's four Yards.'

A list of early American bookplates reads like a roster of important Colonial personages. George Washington and half a dozen other Presidents have used them and all of our important engravers, both old and modern, have made numerous bookplates. Among the latter, it is interesting to know that Paul Revere, of historical fame, engraved some particularly fine examples. The story is the same in England, France, Italy and other countries. In England such artists as Bartolozzi, Bewick, Faithorne, Hogarth and others who rank with them have left a magnificent number of designs for such personages as Byron, Carlyle, Cowper, Dickens, Lamb, Southey, Walpole and a literally interminable list of royalty, institutions, and individuals. The Franks collection of bookplates in the British Museum numbers over thirty-five thousand items. The Metropolitan Museum of Art now has a collection approximating twenty-five thousand, whilst the collections of the American Antiquarian Society aggregate

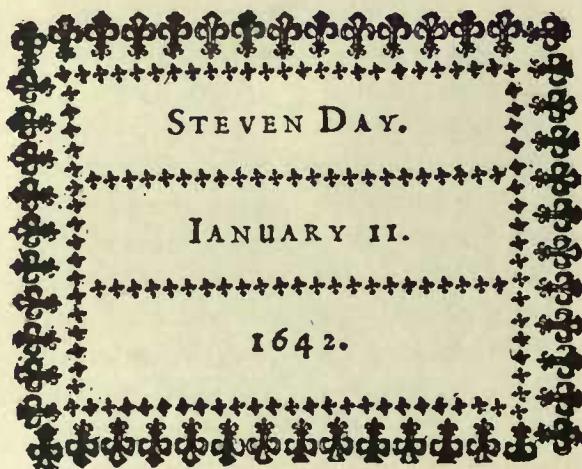


One of the most interesting examples of a portrait bookplate is that of *Samuel Pepys*, the famous Diarist. The plate, which was engraved by Robert White after one of the portraits by Sir Godfrey Kneller, seems to have been originally used as a frontispiece for *Memoirs of the Navy* which the owner privately printed in 1690. There is no doubt, however, about his having also used the design as a bookplate because it is still to be found doing duty as such in his books at Magdalene College.

over twenty-five thousand American bookplates alone.

Development of the art of the bookplate parallels history, as a study of it readily shows. The early use of heraldry is an example. In France at the time of the revolution we find the Phrygian cap of liberty replacing the crest and coronet, and titles

giving way to *Citoyen*. A future study of Russian bookplates will probably show similar results. The art of the bookplate changes, and by changing remains a living thing that will develop and continue to exist as long as men reverence learning and books.



The typographical label of *Steven Day*, the Cambridge printer, is thought to be the earliest American bookplate. It was apparently printed by the owner, who was the first Colonial printer and the printer of the *Bay Psalm Book*. Only one copy of the label is known and is to be found in the collection of the American Antiquarian Society.

## II. EARLY AMERICAN BOOKPLATES

The bookplate enthusiast's research frequently turns up rare bits of romance in the fields of history. Witness the recent discovery of what is thought to be the very first American bookplate and which is also, apparently, *the second piece of printing in America* now extant! The fact is not definitely proved but it is a conclusion drawn from the examples of early American printing now known. The bookplate in question is the typographical label of Steven Day, printer of the *Bay Psalm Book*, and bears the date, '11 January 1642.' Only one copy of it is known and it is to be found in the collection of the American Antiquarian Society.

As Mr Charles Dexter Allen points out in *American Bookplates*, undoubtedly the first bookplates used in America came over pasted in the books of Dutch and English settlers. But the work of our early engravers soon appears on the scene. One of these early engravers, Nathaniel Hurd (1730-1777) is one of the most important, from our point of view, and has over fifty bookplates to his credit. Then comes Joseph Callender (1751-1821), who made about twenty-five bookplates; Henry Dawkins, who engraved some beautiful Chippendale bookplates which well display the talent that brought him to grief as a counterfeiter; the Mavericks, father and son; Paul Revere, whose historical ride will thrill the schoolboy for ages to come, and a score or more of lesser names. As a matter of fact, all of the Colonial engravers have a number of bookplates to their credit, to which we are indebted, time and again, for both interest-

ing and important sidelights on the famous characters of the time.

George Washington's bookplate is perhaps the most interesting early American bookplate. It is a handsome armorial design in Chippendale style. The arms of his family are displayed on the usual rococo shield surrounded by conventional sprays and roses. The motto, *Exitus acta probat* (The end shows the deed), is borne on a ribbon below the shield whilst the name *George Washington* is engraved in script on a rococo tablet at the base. The engraver of the plate is unknown but the fact that the arms are not heraldically correct, in that a wreath has been placed under the coronet and the eagle in the crest is incorrectly displayed, shows that the engraver did not know as much about heraldry as any English engraver of that period would have known, and leads to the conclusion that it must have been engraved in America. More evidence in favor of this theory results from a search of Washington's bills of goods received from London which do not show the purchase of a bookplate abroad, as was the custom with many Colonial gentlemen.

The Washington bookplate is very rare; so rare, in fact, that the plate has been counterfeited. The spurious design is very poorly done, however, and may be easily recognized. The counterfeit was used in an attempt to raise the value of some books to be sold at auction but it was immediately detected by the name being poorly engraved, the printing poorly done, and by the use of palpably modern paper. Another difference readily perceived by the student of heraldry



*Paul Revere*

The bookplate Paul Revere, of historical fame, engraved for himself, will be of more than ordinary interest as long as bookplates exist. The original is in copper-plate engraving. It is a rare 'Early American' much in demand with collectors of old bookplates.

is a difference in the tinctures of the crest, *sable* in the original and *gules* in the forgery. A copy of the design has also been made by a modern engraver but it does not pose as the original, the impressions being printed on Japanese vellum. For some years the original copper-plate was supposed to have been cut into pieces by a fanatical owner and thrown into the Schuylkill river; but the original copper now rests peacefully in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, to which institution it was given by a donor who obtained it from Mr George L. Washington, of Jefferson County, Virginia.

Amongst the early presidents, John Adams, John Quincy Adams, and John Tyler also used bookplates. The John Adams bookplate displays a shield of arms with a belt bearing the motto, *Libertatem amicitiam retinebis et fidem* (Keep liberty, friendship, and good faith), the whole surrounded by thirteen brilliant stars. The name John Adams is engraved in script below the design. The bookplate of John Quincy Adams is of the style known as Festoon Armorial, the spade shield and crest being enclosed by wreaths and the name engraved below the design, which does not bear a motto. John Tyler's bookplate is a plain printed label.

Although Theodore Roosevelt's bookplate is not early American, it should be noticed

while we are talking about the bookplates of the Presidents. Roosevelt was the first President to use a bookplate after John Tyler. The bookplate is as unpretentious as was the man himself to those who really knew him well. Books were all over the house at Sagamore Hill but the special treasures bearing the bookplate were kept in the library, which was also a sort of office although, at first glance, it more closely resembled a museum devoted to hunting. Following the good precedent set by Washington and other early presidents, the bookplate is armorial and displays the Roosevelt arms on an Elizabethan shield. The heraldry is of special interest as an example of *armes parlantes*: two rose plants, bearing three roses, growing out of a mound or veldt.

Whilst most early American bookplates were armorial, there are also some fine pictorial examples, mostly for institutions, and some interesting typographical labels. With the growth of private libraries, we find the modern bookplate frequently being designed with a view to being appropriate for some special collection or class of books in the library. This phase of the subject, in conjunction with the natural classes of design such as armorial, pictorial, symbolical, and portrait bookplates, forms an interesting study in itself, as we shall soon see.



The bookplate for *George Harry Milsted*, a wood-engraving by T. Sturge Moore, shows unusually fine artistic qualities, both in design and execution. In capable hands, engraving on wood is a good medium for a bookplate design, but the effect is harsh and inflexible if it is not handled with skill. Mr Moore's bookplate designs always display the medium at its best. The lettering and border on this bookplate are by the Eragny Press.

### III. MODERN BOOKPLATES

In thinking of the various classes into which bookplates may be divided, armorial designs first come to mind. The earliest examples were plain shields of arms but the old German engravers added crests, with mantling and scrolls; and there were soon many variations. In England we find styles known as Chippendale, which correspond to rococo on the Continent, Jacobean, ribbon and wreath, festoon, full armorial achievements with supporters, mantling, and badges of knighthood, and arms blazoned on lozenges in the bookplates for women; to comply with the law of heraldry that a woman cannot use a crest and her arms must be shown on a lozenge or diamond-shaped shield.

Portrait bookplates were also used in very early times. There is the portrait of Willibald Pirckheimer by Dürer which has been found in use as a bookplate and which was perhaps the very first of its kind. It is a wonderful piece of work and under the genial countenance of the old Nuremberg jurist is engraved *Sibi et amici S. P. Liber Biblialdi Pirckheimer*. Another old German portrait bookplate is the *Dr. jur. Johann Wolfgang Freymon von Oberhausen* by Jost Amman, dated 1574, which is another fine piece of work.

Samuel Pepys used a portrait bookplate engraved in two sizes by Robert White after one of the portraits by Sir Godfrey Kneller, examples of which are still to be found faithfully doing their duty in his books at Magdalene College, Cambridge. Modern portrait bookplates, most frequently used in bookplates marking bequests in libraries, exercise

the ingenuity of the engraver to the fullest extent, as it takes a capable burin to engrave a really good portrait.

Bookplates sometimes bear mottoes warning book-borrowers against not returning the books lent to them, and sometimes the bookplate consists of a simple label with just the motto and the owner's name. One old owner quotes the thirty-seventh Psalm against unscrupulous borrowers of books, 'The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again.' Another old label bears a trite admonition:

*Bookkeeping taught in three words,  
Never lend them!*

A friendly warning says,

*They who borrow books and soon restore,  
May come again to borrow more.*

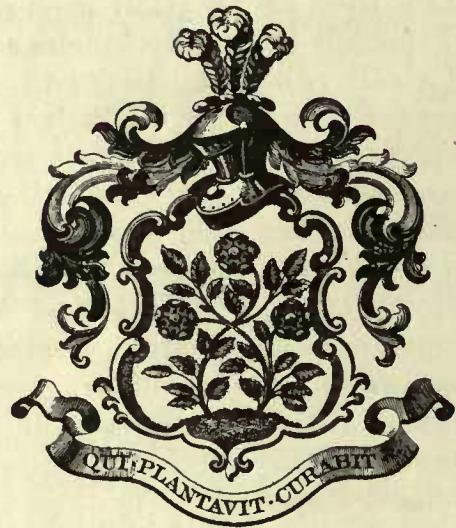
And again,

*If thou art borrowed by a friend, right  
welcome shall he be  
To read, to study; not to lend; but  
to return to me.*

Not so gentle, but probably quite as effective, we find:

*Steal not this book, my honest friend,  
For fear the gallows will be your end;  
Up the ladder and down the rope,  
There you'll hang until you choke.  
Then I'll come along and say,  
'Where is that book you took away?'*

Not many bookplate enthusiasts realize that Abraham Lincoln once used a bookplate, or used a bookplate once, to be more exact.



Theodore Roosevelt.

The bookplate used by *Theodore Roosevelt* is a rare item in bookplate collections because the owner would not exchange it and seldom gave away impressions of it. The arms form an interesting example of *armes parlantes*: two rose plants, bearing three roses, growing out of a mound, or veldt. The original is a copper-plate engraving, artist unknown, which may be classed as plain armorial with mantling.

In Lord Charnwood's *Life of Abraham Lincoln*, we find,—'An earlier manuscript [of Lincoln's] concludes with the distich,

*"Abraham Lincoln, his book and pen,  
He will be good, but God knows when."*

At least one owner, who is also an author, writes epigrams in the fronts of his books, giving us a classification of *Epigrammatic Bookplates*. He speaks for himself in his bookplate, or epigram, in his copy of Southey's *Cowper*:

*Dear Cowper, in my present low estate  
I cannot purchase an engraved bookplate.  
You made bird-cages when you could not  
buy;  
You used your brain and hands, and so do I.*

In Keats' *Works*, we find:

*Keats, like an aloe of this country side,  
Grew for a score of years, then flower'd and  
died,  
Why should we mourn for dust beneath our  
feet?  
His flower is everlasting, fresh and sweet.*

In Shelley's *Poems*:

*He soared o'er human warmth to sink at  
rest,  
As skylarks do, within a humid nest.  
'Twas fit the lover of the wind and cloud  
Should be invested with a watery shroud.*

The field for such epigrammatic bookplates is limitless and enables a gifted book-owner to have original bookplates that fill some of the requirements of good bookplates better than they can be attained in any other way. Each is perfectly suited to the book and expresses a phase of the owner's individuality that it would be almost impossible to express otherwise. Mr W. J. Ibbett is the author of the lines quoted.

Bookplates showing piles of books, known simply as 'book-piles' were popular in England during the last half of the nineteenth century, as were also allegorical designs. They were soon succeeded, however, by pictorial designs showing the interior of the owner's library, a landscape, or the owner's favorite garden corner. Decorative motifs employing monograms, wreaths, and sometimes architectural designs are also frequently seen. Symbolical bookplates are more rare, but are frequently found with Masonic and similar insignia. Libraries and other institutions usually choose formal decorative designs with a view, primarily, to their utility. But one of the most interesting classifications is that of bookplates for children.

Looking through a collection of bookplates for children is like looking at a well illustrated fairy tale where elves and gnomes delve underground, fairies dance in mystic rings in the moonlight, and cupids and sprites step daintily from petal to petal on their important missions to guide and guard and amuse little folk. Jack, of Beanstalk fame, Giants, and all of our Mother Goose friends are there in a host. Here a toy soldier guards a building-block castle and there a youngster rides his hobby-horse up to the castle gate to waken the fairy princess. He reminds me of the bookplate enthusiast riding his wholesome and exhilarating hobby! By all of which we may easily see the truth of our earlier statement that the subject matter for bookplates presents practically an unlimited field for the exercise of the ingenuity of both owner and artist.

We have seen how the art of the bookplate developed as time went on. A general survey of the modern bookplate in any country shows its present state to be largely indicative of the styles prevailing and progress attained in the graphic arts in that country.



The bookplate for *Thomas Upham Coe*, a copper-plate etching by Sidney L. Smith, is a good example of that artist's versatility. The whole design consistently carries out the Egyptian motif, even to the lettering which is made to resemble hieroglyphics.

In olden times, the use of heraldry in practically all bookplates limited changes of style almost entirely to variations of ornament in accordance with the types of formal decoration in vogue at various periods. The most important factor in the development of the art of the bookplate into a fine art was the widespread increase in learning; with a consequent increase in books and reverence for them. The greater demand for bookplates, together with the development of easy methods of reproduction, resulted in a democratization of bookplate designing which places the art within the skill, but not necessarily within the talents, of every artist. As a result, the modern bookplate is essentially the product of the artist whereas the old bookplates were usually merely engraved copies of armorial achievements, blazoned by more or less artistic heralds.

Armorial designs still predominate in England and France and, to a considerable extent, in Italy. The bookplates of the rest of continental Europe are usually pictorial or symbolical and of broad treatment, resembling our posters. In England, the arms are usually handsomely engraved, or etched, and sometimes accompanied by a decorative border and possibly a monogram or small scene; but in France and Italy we usually find the armorial bookplate a poor reproduction, mechanical or otherwise, of mediocre blazonry. In America, pictorial and decorative designs are in the majority and comparatively few armorial achievements are used.

A volume would have to be written on the work of each famous modern bookplate artist to do the subject justice, so we will, for the present time, have to content ourselves with a few general remarks. We have already enumerated some of the famous 18th century English engravers who made bookplates. Among the most popular recent

English engravers and etchers we find the late Charles William Sherborn, R.E., and the late George W. Eve, R.E., both with a large number of fine examples to their credit. Naturally, most of them were armorial. Many other engravers who have produced meritorious work should be mentioned in detail but justice must be deferred until a volume on modern bookplate design appears. We must not, however, fail to mention by name, at least, such present-day designers as Anning Bell, Frank Brangwyn, D. Y. Cameron, Gordon Craig, and Sturge Moore, all of whom have worked wonders for the art.

In America, the late Edwin Davis French and the late J. Winfred Spenceley produced a large number of fine bookplates. Those by French are characterized by an intricacy and strength of detail which were doubtless the result of the artist's knowledge of silver-engraving. Spenceley's bookplates consist mostly of charming etched landscapes, which are beautiful prints in miniature, or the delicate ornament that etching produces in capable hands. The work of Sidney L. Smith is perhaps best characterized by its versatility in the display of various types of design and media, each a perfect example of its kind. Mr Smith's portraits are particularly fine. Other names of importance in present-day American bookplate design include William F. Hopson, William Edgar Fisher, A. N. Macdonald and, not to exhaust the list by any means, Dugald Stewart Walker, who is making some fine bookplates with fairies and butterflies and flowers which are quite unique and very beautiful.

In Germany and Spain, the poster-like qualities already mentioned are very evident. Reproduction in colors is frequent; whilst the effect is striking, the designs do not seem appropriate as bookplates. The Marquis Franz von Bayros, an Austrian, is a remarkable exception. His work is per-



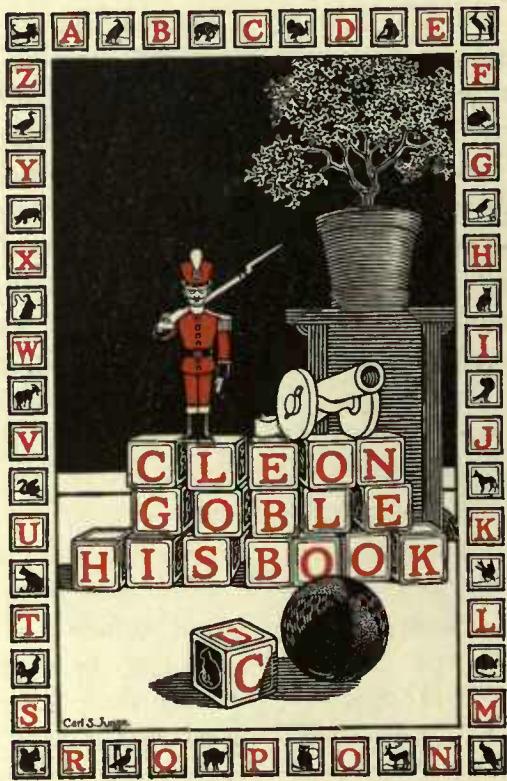
The bookplate for *Steffi Brach*, by Franz von Bayros, is typical of the artist's thorough mastery of detail and of his remarkable figure delineation. In writing of his bookplates, von Bayros says, 'I often use rococo subjects for the delicate lines and dainty roses, with their dancing amourettes, fall lightly from my fingers. I have no need to search out fancies and ideas; the pen runs of itself.'

haps the finest of its kind that has ever been done. A mastery of beautiful and intricate detail, and an absolute mastery in the handling of figures, place his bookplates in a class by themselves. Examples of his work are very much sought after wherever bookplates are collected.

Of the making of bookplates in Belgium there is no end. From our point of view, most of them seem hastily drawn and as hastily reproduced. There are a few exceptions to the rule, however, one of them being Louis Titz, who has made a large number of fine etched bookplates. Some of his recent work very clearly shows the effect of the war on the art of the bookplate. He has

etched a series of *Ex-libris de ruines* which have Belgian ruins for their central motif, and which are particularly appropriate to mark the books of a person who is gathering a new library to replace one lost in the war. One interesting design of this nature shows a house at Ypres in ruins, with only one wall standing, and on the wall is written '*Ici était ma bibliothèque.*'

Bookplate history, as we have seen, shows the art of the bookplate to be a living thing which readily adapts itself to changing conditions and requirements. We shall examine this vitality more closely and see the importance of Bookplate Collecting in connection with it.



The *Cleon Goble* bookplate, by Carl S. Junge, answers every requirement as an ideal bookplate for a child. It possesses all of the elements of a good Story Book illustration and will add interest to every book in the child's library, both while he is young and as he grows older. The bookplate will add interest to school books as well as nursery books, too.

## IV. BOOKPLATE COLLECTING

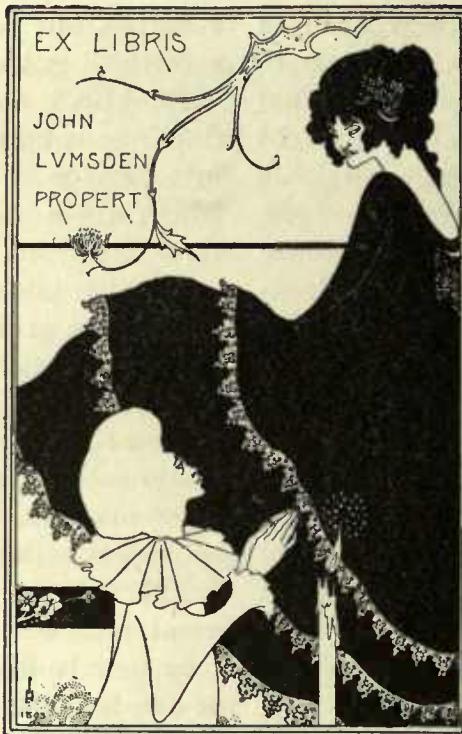
Collecting bookplates is closely akin to print collecting. The custom has been in vogue for more than a century; as the first collection was supposed to have been brought together by Miss Jenkins of Bath, England, early in the nineteenth century. In 1880, Lord de Tabley, then J. Leicester Warren, published his *Guide to the Study of Bookplates*, which was the first book in English on the subject and which excited a considerable amount of interest. The custom of collecting bookplates became popular both in England and on the Continent, and soon spread to America. Bookplate societies were formed in every country, collectors and enthusiasts appeared in great numbers, and a large literature on the subject came into being. *The Journal of the Ex-libris Society*, published by the English Ex-libris Society, is easily the most important of all these publications and is a veritable mine of information. A series of books devoted to English, French, and German bookplates soon appeared, as well as numerous other publications dealing with special phases of the subject, and an enormous catalogue of the collection of over thirty-five thousand bookplates bequeathed to the British Museum by Sir Augustus Wollaston Franks. About this time Mr Charles Dexter Allen's *American Bookplates* appeared in the United States and set the movement in motion over here. Mr Allen's book was an invaluable addition to bookplate literature, dealing with all phases of the subject in a comprehensive manner. The lists of early American bookplates he published now need to be revised and enlarged in the light of further

research, but the book may still be taken as a faithful guide.

Bookplate collecting is invaluable to the development and continued vitality of the art. Large collections, particularly those which are accessible in our public institutions, furnish a field for study and comparison which enables the artist to lay a solid foundation of the traditions of the art under the super-structure of his own original ideas. Bookplate owners who have no sympathy for the collector and who employ their bookplates solely for utilitarian purposes, sometimes overlook this very important phase of bookplate collecting.

The vast number of bookplates and the great number of classifications into which they may be divided, lead most collectors to devote their energies to forming special collections. A long list of such possible special collections could be made. The general classifications are such as armorial, pictorial, symbolical, decorative and portrait designs. Then the subject may be divided by nationality, period, or process. Special collections may be devoted to the work of individual artists where the collector takes a check-list of the artist's work and tries to secure a print of every bookplate he ever made. The pursuit is fascinating and usually sets some high hurdles for the huntsman to clear. Since bookplate making has become an art, we find many books devoted entirely to the work of one artist; and these books usually include check-lists of all the bookplates designed by that artist.

Speaking of process, in the last paragraph, brings up a subject which is much



The John Lumsden Property is one of only three bookplates drawn by Aubrey Beardsley. A number of his drawings have been adapted to the use of bookplates by having appropriate lettering added by other hands, but this design, the one for *Olive Custance* (Lady Alfred Douglas), and a drawing without lettering which the artist called his own bookplate, are the only drawings actually intended to be bookplates when they were drawn.

discussed: the relative merits of the different processes by which bookplates are printed. This man prefers line-engraving, either on copper or steel. That one prefers etching, whilst another considers the wood-block the ideal medium. Then we find the man who advocates photographic reproduction because it enables the artist to draw without being hampered by any difficult medium, such as the copper-plate or wood-block. On looking over a large collection one is led to the conclusion that each process has its advantages and disadvantages, and that an important part of the secret of a harmonious bookplate's charm lies in the artist's mastery of his medium instead of in the medium itself.

Other interesting specialties are indulged in by collectors. The list is practically inexhaustible and includes angling designs, bookplates depicting ships, bookplates for children, ladies' bookplates, to which a whole book has been devoted, and even erotic designs which flourish almost exclusively in continental Europe. Some years ago the author advocated specializing in artistic bookplates—the Bookplate Beautiful—but the suggestion was not popularly received. Could it have been because such a collection of artistic bookplates, chosen according to the dictates of the collector's own taste, would have been too revealing as an index to his art appreciation? In this respect such

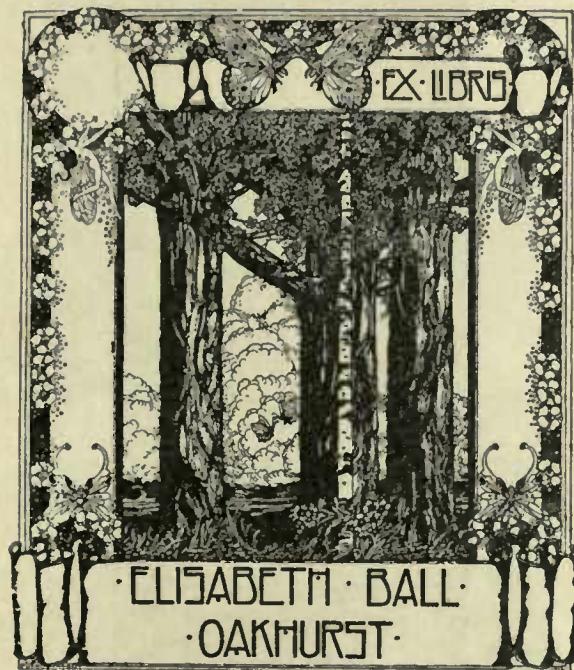
a collection would resemble a library, which is always an index to the trend and development of the owner's mind.

Bookplate collections arranged according to family names are valuable aids in genealogical research and have been known to help in the solution of problems in history and philology. A French publisher has recently issued a book devoted to *ex-libris de guerre*, which opens up another interesting specialty for collectors.

During the war, the various societies devoted to the subject of bookplates were quiescent but quickly resumed their activities after the cessation of hostilities. These societies all have fairly large memberships and offer a medium for intercommunication between members which keeps up considerable interest in bookplates in general and bookplate collecting in particular. We have already shown the importance of the latter in keeping the art alive. Another important function of the societies is the publication of books devoted to the subject which could not appear otherwise on account of the limited demand making them impracticable for commercial publishers. Bookplate collecting still flourishes, having safely passed through the stage of being merely a fad, and has settled down to a pace that augurs well for the continued popularity of the use of bookplates as long as men read and own books.



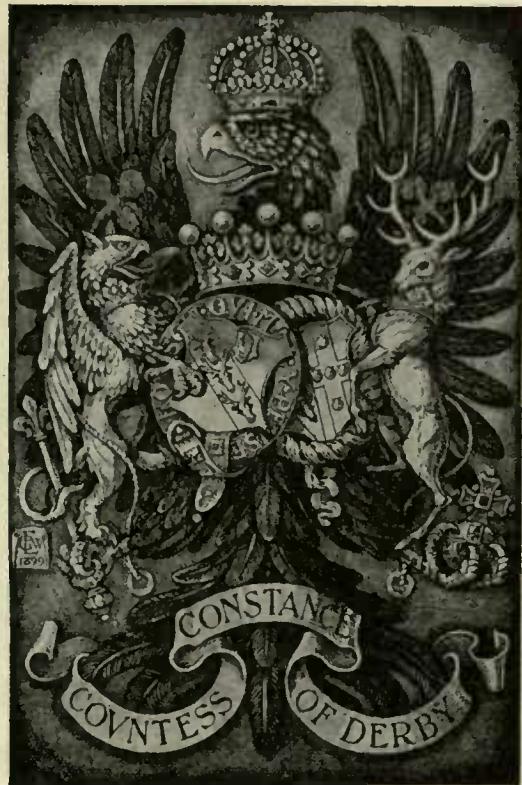
The bookplate for the folio volumes in the Windsor Castle Library, designed and etched in copper in 1898 by George W. Eve, R. E., is typical of that artist's absolute mastery of the art of heraldry and his remarkable ability to express it in copper-plate etching. In *Bookplates by George W. Eve, R. E.*, Mr. Viner describes the design: 'The Royal Arms within the Garter, with crest and supporters . . . Above, on either side, within Garters, are the badges of St. George, and the Tudor rose of Henry VII over the "sunburst" badge of Edward III. Below is a band of oak and laurel leaves placed alternately, with a Tudor rose in the centre.'



Dugald Stewart Walker has illustrated a number of books of fairy tales in a particularly pleasing manner. Most of his bookplates are in the same light and airy style as that for Elisabeth Ball.



The *Charles Harvey Bentley* bookplate is a copper-plate etching by J. Winfred Spenceley, after a design by Albertine Randall Wheelan. The combination of the winged Victory, the tall pine, and the Pacific ocean, makes an attractive and majestic composition. The bookplate is a brilliant achievement, typical of J. Winfred Spenceley at his best.



The bookplate for *Constance Countess of Derby* was designed and etched in copper in 1899 by George W. Eve, R.E. It is a full armorial achievement without motto, of two shields *accollé*; the dexter shield displaying the arms of Stanley encircled by the Garter and the sinister shield displaying the arms of Stanley impaling Villiers. This design is also a good example of Eve's masterful handling of heraldry.



The bookplate for *Jules Darct* is one of a series of *Ex-libris de Ruines* by Louis Titz, the Belgian artist who draws bookplates as a recreation. The owner's library was destroyed at Ypres in 1914, as shown by the scene. A fine touch of sentiment is added by the simple inscription on the remaining library wall, 'Ici était ma bibliothèque.'



The bookplate for *Anton Pach*, a contemporary Spanish design, illustrates the growing tendency in modern bookplates towards emphasis of the pure art elements, and subordination of the traditional utilitarian elements of bookplate design.

Joan Phillips



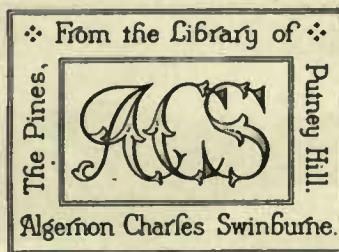
Harold Nelson, who drew the bookplate for *Joan Phillips*, is well known for his book-decorations and illustrations. The bookplate is a fine example of the artist's handling of pen and brush, and ink; embodying the features of design in which he specializes, figures and heraldry.



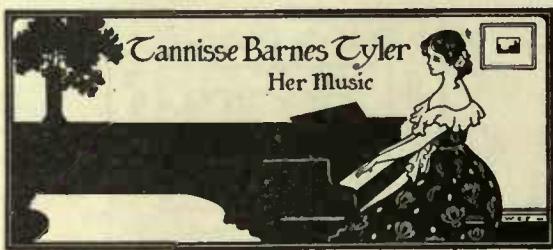
The *Percival Fisher Stoddard* is a copper-plate etching by William Fowler Hopson after a design by Frederick Miner. It is a good example of pictorial design and shows how suitably such a subject may be adapted to this use.



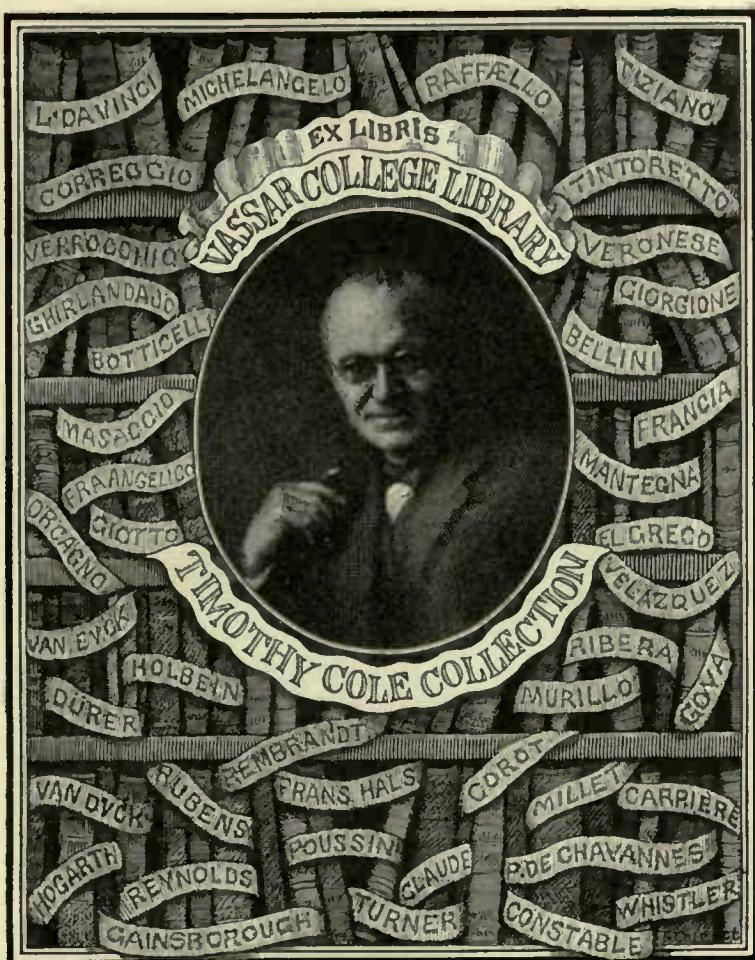
The bookplate for *Clement K. Shorter* is the only bookplate Phil May, the famous caricaturist of *Punch* and the *Graphic*, ever drew. Humor is a rare quality in bookplate design but is found here in abundance, showing that it can be appropriately used.



The bookplate used by *Algernon Charles Swinburne*, the poet, is a good example of a plain typographical label. Collectors frequently specialize in the bookplates of authors.



Bookplates for marking music and music books are sometimes called *music markers*. This is a particularly pleasant phase of the Art of the Bookplate as shown by the *music marker* for *Tannisse Barnes Tyler* by William Edgar Fisher.



The bookplate by Timothy Cole for the *Timothy Cole Collection, Vassar College Library*, is typical of his well-known wood-engraving and is of particular interest because of the artist's self-engraved portrait.



The *Yale Club* bookplate is a good example of the appropriateness of classical motifs in institutional bookplates. It is a copper-plate engraving by Edwin Davis French, after one of only eight designs for bookplates drawn by Howard Pyle.



The bookplate for the poet, W. B. Yeats, is a wood-engraving by T. Sturge Moore. It represents the owner's favorite symbol, 'a candle in a boat adrift in a stormy sea. This is shown surrounded by the mystic rose sculptured in stone, with figures representing Youth and Age on either side.'

THE DOVES PRESS  
EX LIBRIS  
H. ALFRED FOWLER

This plain typographical bookplate was printed at the Doves Press, in the Doves Press type, and is particularly suitable for use in the fine books issued from that press by Mr Cobden-Sanderson. It is an example of the use of a special bookplate to mark a special collection of books.

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# A LIST OF BOOKS

*Bookplates for Beginners*, by Alfred Fowler, is a book that treats of the whole subject of bookplates, or *ex-libris*. It deals comprehensively with the origin of bookplates; with their early use in America; with the many phases of the art in modern times, and with bookplate collecting. The book is freely illustrated and is printed on Old Stratford paper, large quarto in size, bound in art boards. Price \$5.00 per copy.

*The Bookplate Annual for 1921*, a comprehensive survey of the year in bookplates, comprises, among others, articles on the bookplates of Frank Brangwyn, on the earliest American bookplate, and on a bookplate found in a Filipino thatched hut. It also presents a short history of the American Bookplate Society and an illustrated Catalogue of the Sixth Annual Exhibition. The illustrations, more than a score in number, include an original etching and several prints in colors. The book is printed on Old Stratford paper, large quarto in size, and is substantially bound in art boards. Price \$5.00 per copy.

*A Directory of Bookplate Artists*, with notes concerning their work; compiled from data furnished by the artists, by Alfred Fowler. Price \$1.00 per copy.

*J. J. Lankes: Painter-Graver on Wood*, by Bolton Brown. A critical essay with six wood-engravings by Mr Lankes. Bds. Price \$1.50 per copy.

*Bookplates by Sidney L. Smith*, by Gardner Teall. A critical essay with a check-list and two original copper-plate impressions of bookplates by the artist. Price \$1.00 per copy.

*Bookplates by Henry J. Stock, R. I.*, by James Guthrie. A critical essay with check-list and nine illustrations, including the artist's portrait and a frontispiece in colors. Price \$1.00 per copy.

*A Catalogue of Bookplates by Stanley Harrod*. Seven illustrations, including an original etching. Price \$0.50 per copy.

## *In Preparation*

*The Bookplate Annual for 1922*

Edited by Alfred Fowler.

Complete descriptions will be sent on request. The publications may be obtained through any bookseller or directly from:

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