sheets provide a comprehensive selection base for Canadian as well as other medical librarians. The addresses that are supplied are most helpful—Canadian health science serials, Canadian publishers and book dealers, library suppliers, binders, and organizations.

Phyllis Russell deserves high praise for gathering such a wealth of useful information and assembling it in such an orderly fashion. It is to be hoped that this Guide will be frequently revised, and that in subsequent editions the typography can be improved: the print is so small that it detracts seriously from the handyness of the handbook.

Virginia Parker

(Since 1967 Ms. Parker has been the Librarian of the Health Sciences Library, Queen’s University. Previously, from 1957-1967, she was Librarian of the Texas Medical Center Library, ib Houston.)


In recent years, several volumes of reminiscences of men and women who have made their mark in the field of rare books, whether as dealers or librarians, have published. Each book in its way gives us some insight into how and why they came to devote their lives to the pursuit and discovery, the scholarly study, and the buying and selling of old and rare books, maps, prints, and ancient and modern manuscripts.

On the eve of the International Women’s Year appeared the recollections of two well known New York book dealers, the erudite and dynamic partners in the firm of Leona Rostenberg Rare Books, Leona Rostenberg and Madeleine B. Stern. The twelve chapters, describing their experiences during “thirty years in the book business” are written alternately by the two co-authors. Entertaining and at the same time full of interesting reflections on books and the book dealer’s profession, Old & Rare is eminently readable. The partners’ annual buying trips to England and the Continent result in some of the most memorable passages in the book, and acquaint us with many well known dealers. The volume ends with a checklist of nearly three hundred old and rare books and pamphlets, selected from among the thousands of items that have passed through their hands over the years.

The firm was founded by the “senior partner” Leona Rostenberg, shortly after the end of the second World War. After historical studies at Columbia University, she spent a year doing research at the library of the University of Strasbourg, where, in the course of her work she handled hundreds of early 16th century books. In the same year, a conversation with a Parisian book dealer suggested the possibility of a career in the field of antiquarian books. Early in 1944, after a five year apprenticeship with a European dealer who had recently settled in New York, which she describes as “Five years in Siberia”, Leona Rostenberg decided to go into business on her own. In this she was encouraged by a good friend since college days, Madeleine Stern, who presented her with a set of engraved letterheads and invoice forms. Shortly afterwards, in the spring of 1945, Madeleine Stern, who had done some teaching and writing after graduation from university, joined the firm as “junior partner”.

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Specializing at first in Renaissance and Reformation materials, they soon branched into other fields and epochs, and added Americana to their stock. The partners have a definite predilection for pamphlets and tracts, those “eye-witness accounts of another age”, whether they be religious, social, economic or scientific in content, whether they depict heroic deeds of the past or the “minutiae of daily existence . . . the cost of bread and earrings, vine and pepper . . . regulations for road maintenance . . . musket and harquebus practice . . .” Already the first catalogue of the firm reflected its specialized and scholarly nature. It appeared in the spring of 1946 and contained “divers matters relating to the history of the book”. Examples of other catalogues are: The Century of Conflict 1600-1700; The Aldine Press; The French Revolution; 1776: Causes and Effects.

Successful in their business enterprise, and happy in their profession which allies the “delights of scholarship with the excitement of the trade”, the two bookwomen have been and of course still are very active in national and international professional organizations. In 1963, Madeleine Stern was instrumental in setting up the Antiquarian Booksellers Center. It is a cooperative store, maintained in the Rockefeller Centre’s concourse on Fifth Avenue by about sixty dealers, which shows representative samples from their stock and issues collective catalogues. In 1972, Leona Rostenberg was elected president of the Antiquarian Booksellers Association of America. In her inaugural address she gives us an interesting picture of the role of women in the antiquarian book world in the U.S. It seems that women have always been active in the A.B.A.A., and constitute 26% of the total membership. They either own their own shops or are associated with antiquarian book firms. A member of another well known American team of women dealers, Frances Hamill of the Chicago firm of Hamill & Barker, was one of the early presidents of the A.B.A.A. However, even after the International Women’s Year one honour is still out of reach to women in the rare book world — they cannot become members of the Grolier Club of New York, which groups collectors, dealers, librarians and other booksmen.

For many years the firm operated from an “unstylish address” in the Bronx. The partners preferred it to a downtown location with its formal shop hours which would have left them no opportunity to “come and go, to pursue our own literary projects”. Their literary and research projects, as well as their talks and lectures, have appeared in numerous books and articles. They relate to their profession, to the history of printing and publishing, and to many other fields. Madeleine Stern is a well known biographer of American women, and has written on feminist topics.²

In Old & Rare the authors have shown that an antiquarian dealer who conducts his business in an intelligent and enlightened way occupies an important
place in the “mainstream of continuity” of our documented past. He “digs
precious monuments from under the ruins of ages”, monuments which he passes
to “other diggers, other searchers”, librarians and scholars.

Liana Van der Bellen

(Ms. Van de Bellen is the Chief of the Rare Books and Manuscripts Division in
the National Library of Canada, and was formerly a professor at the Ecole de
bibliothéconomie Université de Montréal.)

1. E. Millicent Sowerby, Rare People and Rare Books, London: Constable,

E.M. Sowerby was associated with Sotheby’s and also worked for Dr. Rosen-
bach. She later was Bibliographer of the Jefferson Collection at the Library
of Congress.

David A. Randall, Dukedom Large Enough, New York: Rancom House,
1969, 368 p.

Randall was manager of the Rare Book Department at Scribner’s in New
York: and later became librarian of the Lilly (rare book) Library at Indiana
University.

David Magee, Infinite Riches; the Adventures of a Rare Book Dealer, New

Magee was born in England but moved to the U.S. and is a rare book dealer
in San Francisco.

Margaret B. Stillwell, Librarians are Human; Memories In and Out of the
Rare Book World, 1907-1970, Boston: Colonial Society of Massachusetts,

M.B. Stillwell was Rare Book Librarian at Brown University’s Annmary
Brown Memorial Library, Providence, R.I.

John H. Jenkins, Audubon and Other Capers: Confessions of a Texas Book-

The Texas dealer recently acquired the stock of the famous firm of Eberstadt
of New York.

2. Some examples of their writings are given here:

Leona Rostenberg, English Publishers in the Graphic Arts, 1599-1700; a
Study of the Print-Sellers & Publishers of Engravings, Art & Architectural

-------------, Literary, Political, Scientific, Religious & Legal Publishing,
Printing & Bookselling in England, 1551-1700... New York: B. Franklin,
1965, 2 v.

-------------, The Minority Press & the English Crown; a Study in Repression,


"Feminism is Collectible Antiquarian Bookman's Weekly v. 55 (March 3, 1975), p. 1971-1982. (This article includes a list of books for a "Feminist Library". It was updated in the AB Weekly of Jan. 28 1976)


MICROFORM GUIDES

Catalogue des microéditions, Bibliothèque nationale du Québec, Service de microphotographie. Montréal: Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère des affaires culturelles, 1974. iii, 76 p., illus., free.


Two recent Canadian contributions to the bibliographic control of microfilms will come as a needed tool for scholars, interlibrary loans librarians, and Canadian specialists.

Catalogue des microéditions, 1974, published under the auspices of Quebec's Ministère des Affaires Culturelles, will serve primarily as a sales catalogue, listing materials acquired and preserved on microfilm by the Bibliothèque Nationale du Québec, for their cultural and historical significance to the province. Part of a systematic conservation program of laurientiana-Québec-published and/or related newspapers, journals, books and archival documents, the catalogue provides access to a wide range of publications, from the unpublished proofs of the Laval edition of Samuel de Champlain's collected works to the first microfilm runs of the contemporary Le Jour.

As explained in the introduction, the microfilming schedule has been influenced both by the acknowledged demand of researchers and libraries for specific items, and the urgency of preserving a number of heavily damaged or fast deteriorating acquisitions. In order to avoid duplication, as well as to allow for the completion of runs already available from other sources, the catalogue