Poems, the estate published over twenty books and pamphlets of Plath's work, and placed more than 100 items in periodicals. Their activity was comparable to that of a living, active writer; and only with the appearance of the long-awaited Collected Poems was there a stasis, a time to recount the writer’s accomplishments. Tabor's bibliography, then, was the first to draw on both major Plath collections [at Smith College and the Lilly Library at Indiana University], the first to annotate the Collected Poems, and the first to point out textual variants. The work truly possesses the widest information base possible.

In addition to the descriptive primary bibliography, Tabor has found a number of anthologies in which Plath’s work appeared and a surprising number of periodicals in which she published [beginning in 1941]. Considering that Ted Hughes began the Collected Poems with the year 1956, indicating that everything Plath had written and published before that year (the year in which they met and married) was juvenilia, it is interesting that there are nearly fifty poems and stories which were published somewhere, and have not appeared in either Plath’s Collected Poems or the Johnny Panic prose collection. Even within the years covered by the presumably ‘collected’ poems, there are some omissions of work that was published in magazines. The implication is that work needs to be done on this quantity of Plath’s writing that may well disappear from sight, unless it is preserved in some collection somewhere.

So far as secondary materials are concerned, again Tabor’s diligence is impressive. He includes materials up to 1985, listing as well as published work those essays and comments found in both the Smith and the Lilly collections.

Other strengths of this bibliography are Tabor’s complete list of Plath’s recordings (both the original recording and the commercial record or tape made from it), her broadcasts, the contents of her archives at Smith and Indiana, dissertations done on Plath’s work (thirty-five up to the early 1980s), musical and dramatic adaptations from her writing, and a listing of translations of her works (French, Hebrew, Italian, Hungarian, German, Japanese, Polish, Romanian, Swedish, and Spanish). I doubt that there will be another bibliography on Plath for some time, given the exhaustive thoroughness of Tabor’s compilation, though an annotated secondary bibliography, prepared by Sheryl Meyering, will be published in 1989.

LINDA WAGNER-MARTIN
(Linda Wagner-Martin is the Hanes Professor of English at University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Her most recent books are Sylvia Plath: A Biography and Sylvia Plath: The Critical Heritage.)


With his massive four-volume History of Book Publishing in the United States (1972-1981), John Tebbel established himself as the dean of historians of the book trade. Those volumes, which should be on the shelves of every bibliographer and
literary historian of American culture, exhaustively detailed the personalities, events, and patterns of three-and-a-half centuries of bookselling. Every region, state, and major city in the republic was mentioned. As well, Tebbel provided brief essays on copyright, technology, censorship, and best sellers, and included statistical charts and an extensive bibliography. By 1987, having seen the need for a one-volume condensation that focuses on trade publishing, he issued *Between Covers*—through Oxford rather than through Bowker, who published the larger version—and this new book will update, if not quite supplant, earlier standard reference works such as Hellmut Lehmann-Haupt's *The Book in America* (1939; rev. and enl., 1951) and Charles A. Madison's *Book Publishing in America* (1966). Indeed, there is an interesting thematic link between those two books and this one.

In the final chapter of his 1951 edition, Lehmann-Haupt called the post-war years 'a critical period,' after the large sales and excitement of World War II. He worried about higher costs, literacy levels, and distribution. In his final chapter in 1966, Madison mentioned the growing number of mergers and the tendency to go public on the part of houses that had traditionally been stamped by the personality of one man. While Lehmann-Haupt and Madison ended on a more or less optimistic note, Tebbel—in that self-critical and even gloomily reflective mood that characterizes the literature and drama of the Reaganite Eighties—is more dubious about the nature and direction of the book trade.

Beginning with Mathew Carey in the 1790s, Tebbel demonstrates the kind of aggressive individuals whose luck and intuition helped transform American publishing from a cottage industry into a community of family-owned businesses, and thence into a corporate structure for whom profits outweigh the quality of the product. The seeds of this transformation, which worries Tebbel so much, began to sprout in the generation after the Civil War when the big-time entrepreneurs and the bankers moved into publishing. Two of these entrepreneurs were the Canadians John W. Lovell (1850-1932) and George H. Doran (1871-1962), both of them sharp, manipulative promoters who marketed books on a grand scale. Perhaps this is the Canadian book trade's gift to the United States, for Canada has not been noted for its distinguished 'literary' publishers. The banker J.P. Morgan placed his own men in control of Harper's after 1896 when this, the largest publishing house in the world, got into financial straits.

While the 'Golden Age'—that period between 1920 and 1940, according to Tebbel—seems to have withstood the non-book entrepreneurs and the bankers, with the presence of such luminaries as Bennett Cerf, the Knopfs, Richard Simon, Max Schuster, and Stanley Rinehart, the shape of things to come was in fact unfolding. By the 1970s and 1980s many of the familiar names in American publishing were merely imprints, for family control was a thing of the past. Almost every successful firm was up for grabs by conglomerates, and inevitably the former managers, usually bookmen, were replaced by professional executives with flow charts and mass-marketing skills. What emerged were the giant publishing corporations such as Time Inc., the Los Angeles Times Mirror Corporation, McGraw-Hill, Crowell Collier & Macmillan, Grolier Inc., and Doubleday. Tebbel says, almost elegiacally (p. 352):
... the industry has become homogenized to a large extent. The great individual figures of the past have gone, those heads of houses whom everyone knew.... The corporate mentality has largely replaced rugged individualism as the result of innumerable and continuing mergers and acquisitions. Houses have been restructured in the corporate image until it could truly be said that the industry is nearly unrecognizable compared with what it was before the last war.

Yet the essence of American publishing remains: that special combination of self-reliance and daring innovation, along with earthy practicality and the dream of changing society.

This highly readable book emphasizes the biographical and the anecdotal, which means that trying to remember all the family dynasties and mergers is rather like remembering all the members of European royal houses. Nevertheless, amid all these stories are some splendid episodes, such as the elderly George Haven Putnam being threatened by the Italian fascists for publishing *Escape* (1930), or the rumour that Horace Liveright rarely read manuscripts, or the activities of the music-loving Simon family (Carly's father), to name only a few. And there is an attempt to discuss the role of women in publishing, although only a handful such as Blanche Knopf and Helen Meyer of Dell have been in positions of real power. However, there is no more than passing mention of the chief problems of distribution, pricing, and corporate takeovers, and we must look elsewhere for analysis. All these woes sound very much like the Canadian situation, and yet there is no mention of American subsidiary expansion abroad. The book itself is a pleasing-looking volume, but unfortunately it is littered with typographical errors, including a 'not' for 'now' on page 389 that completely changes the meaning of a sentence, a flaw that Tebbel, himself a former editor at Dutton and Professor Emeritus of journalism at New York University, would be the first to deplore.

**George L. Parker**

*(George L. Parker is Professor of English and Head of the Department of English and Philosophy at Royal Military College of Canada, Kingston, Ont. He has written articles on nineteenth-century copyright and publishing, and is the author of The Beginnings of the Book Trade in Canada [1985].)*