
This book contains, as such compilations always do, a considerable variety of things; some profound, some slight but entertaining, and some downright silly. It has been "selected and edited" by Carol Z. Rothkopf, but there is little evidence of the editorial hand, although the editor's note says that Stoddard's "most detailed bibliographical works are excluded."

Roger Stoddard is the Curator of Rare Books in the Harvard College Library, which means that he works in the Houghton Library. He first worked there in 1958 as an assistant to the great William Jackson, left briefly to be a Curator at Brown, returned to Harvard, and has been there ever since. He has earned a deservedly high reputation as an acquisitor and one of the major sections of this collection is called "The Librarian as a Collector ... for Others." He confesses that he is not very comfortable in the company of fellow librarians or fellow teachers and researchers; he feels most comfortable with members of the antiquarian book trade and they figure prominently throughout this book – a select group of them. It is thus fitting that the Preface to this volume is by Stephen Weissman of Ximenes Rare Books, and a charming turn it is.

The title of this book is taken from a 1698 letter by Humphrey Wanley, librarian to the Harleys, Earls of Oxford, who created one of the greatest collections of books and manuscripts in the annals of British bibliophilia. Wanley says that the Library-Keeper's business is "to know what books are extant in other Libraries besides his own," and this lesson would have been thoroughly learned by Roger Stoddard from the example of Jackson as he worked on the revision to Pollard and Redgrave's *Short Title Catalogue*. One suspects that he would prefer to be known as a "library-keeper" rather than as a "librarian."

The compilation carries the author from his student days (mercifully brief), through a piece on the teaching of the history of the book at Harvard (a series of courses that began in 1910) to the first large section, called "The Librarian as an Historian." In it is a rough list for an exhibition from 1980 called "Real Books Imagined" which was first published in a festschrift in 1980. It featured ephemeral material concerning the history of publishing and book selling in the form of catalogues ranging from 1477 to the seventeenth century,
copyright documents, publishing contracts, French "control" documents, lending library catalogues, and ephemera of publishing in Boston and Cambridge. I saw the exhibition and lamented the lack of a catalogue and this record of it is most useful. Apart from being able to identify unique items and other rarities held only by Harvard the list provides a startling insight into how that institution has consistently acquired rare books and manuscripts over the years. The list gives the sources of the acquisition funds (but not, of course, the prices) and I have counted 47 different sources, ranging well back into the nineteenth century. How many of the items in the exhibition were acquired by Roger Stoddard one cannot tell, but one might suspect most of the ones which fall into his period of service.

The section on "The Librarian as a Bibliographer" contains a chapter on "marks in books," a reprise on the title of Stoddard's best-known exhibition catalogue, published in 1985. This version was given as a lecture in 1999, published in 2000, given again as a lecture, and revised again for this volume. As he emphasises again, looking closely at a book; at its paper, type, binding, and the various kinds of "marks" introduced into it in various places and at various times can reveal a great deal of useful historical and literary information which can, in turn, be applied in critical analysis. This is a valuable essay.

"The Librarian at the Lectern," a section of six pieces, seems less successful. Stoddard has been introducing the speakers at Winship Lectures for years and no doubt he has his favourites. That these introductions should exist in hard copy at all is unusual: to choose ten of them for publication (did he choose them or did the editor?) is self indulgent. The final section consists of ruminations about the working life of a librarian, but they are not the ruminations of just any old librarian. This is the voice of the preacher, a New England preacher exhorting us to turn away from idleness and mis-spent effort and follow the voice of truth and enlightenment. Perhaps some will heed the call.

The best story in the book is contained in a chapter called "How Harvard Didn't Get Its Rare Books and Manuscripts" and concerns Sir Thomas Phillipps, another contender for the title of "the greatest collector." Phillipps died in 1872 and his collection began to be sold in 1886, in bits and pieces by auction and private treaty. By 1938 the second generation of heirs wished to dispose of what was left, but the War intervened and the collection went into the basements of
Thirlstaine House. In 1944 the Robinson Brothers, a London antiquarian firm, offered £100,000 for it, sight unseen. Apparently, in March 1945, they offered it to Harvard for £110,000, but after much negotiation and efforts to raise money, revealed here in quotations from cables, the offer was turned down. A similar offer was also turned down by the British Museum. The Robinsons then decided to sell the manuscripts and books themselves and began to remove things from their warehouse. In less than a year they had recouped their investment, and ninety percent remained. It became the book deal of the century and they went out of business in 1956 to set up a trust to dispose of the residue of the Phillipps Collection. Even then a residue of the residue was sold to H.P. Kraus for a million dollars.

This working autobiography has several stories like this. It is for dipping and perhaps Roger Stoddard is working on a real memoir.

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Mary Hyde Eccles, the American collector, editor, and moving force in a select circle of international bibliophiles, has been honoured by her fellow members of New York’s Grolier Club on her ninetieth birthday with this collection of essays and addresses. The volume is a loving tribute, and as such it will be most appreciated by her many friends and fellow collectors. For those of us outside this rarefied world the collection will have less appeal. At times, one has to admit, it is downright boring. However the patient reader will find some fascinating glimpses into the arcane world of wealthy American book collectors and an introduction to some of the useful academic work that Hyde Eccles has embarked on in her long career.

This selection, mostly previously unpublished work, is curious. Made up of short addresses, reminiscences, elegies, and even a one-act play starring her husband and his bibliophile friends, it covers her long career as a book lover and collector, beginning with a 1946 article about a Shakespeare forgery and ending with a 2001 talk about her family history. Many of the selections trace the development