
It is difficult to say whether the catalogue of the recent exhibition at the Nickle Arts Museum at the University of Calgary (15 June-29 July, 2005), *Editions and Impressions: Collectors and Their Love of the Works of L.M. Montgomery* (prepared with the assistance of Apollonia Steele), would appeal more to Montgomery’s legions of readers or to bibliophiles. Both constituencies are broad in number and global compass. Indeed, Montgomery’s enormous fan base has been growing continuously since it first began to form around *Anne of Green Gables* in 1908. Within the first few years of the book’s publication by Boston-based L.C. Page, demand for *Anne* spread well beyond the United States and Canada, and readers began to make the now well-established pilgrimage to the Cavendish shore of Prince Edward Island to see “Anne’s world.” Over the past two decades, Montgomery and her books have received increased attention with the Oxford University Press’s publication of the first of five volumes of her selected journals (ed. Mary Rubio and Elizabeth Waterston) and Kevin Sullivan’s television adaptation of *Anne of Green Gables* in 1985. The recent proliferation of editions and of Anne-related commodities is one sign of intensified interest, but perhaps the clearest evidence of the upward trajectory of Montgomery’s value since the 1980s is to be found in the formation of the Anne of Green Gables Licensing Authority and Heirs, Inc. (for the regulation of trademark, ownership, copyright of published and unpublished material, and licensing pertaining to the range of dolls and souvenirs). It should not then be surprising that in this same period of 20 years, early editions of Montgomery’s writing have skyrocketed in value.

“Editions and Impressions” was curated by Mary McConnell, Dani Pahulj, Apollonia Steele, and Cameron Treleaven. The catalogue includes a brief introduction by Mary McConnell, an appreciation by Calgary writer Aritha van Herk, and an essay by Calgary antiquarian bookseller Cameron Treleaven on the acquisition of first editions of *Anne of Green Gables*. Treleaven’s essay is compelling not only its charting of his own experience as a bookseller in pursuit of what he calls the “Holy Grail” of Montgomeriana, the first American edition of *Anne of Green Gables*, but also in its affirmation of eBay as a crucial location for the exchange of Montgomery commodities. He describes
finding of a copy of the first edition that had been “married” to an extremely rare dust jacket, and a validation process that represents an important supplement to the book’s sketchy publishing history.

Abundantly illustrated with images of editions and dust jackets of “true” first editions of Montgomery’s work, the catalogue is an extremely useful bibliographical tool for book collectors with a special interest in Montgomery, as well as for scholars studying Canadian literature in general and book history in particular. Although Montgomery’s relationship with L.C. Page was fraught with tension, and although his treatment of her and her work appears to have been somewhat high-handed and exploitative, it is undeniable that Page produced gorgeous books. The catalogue provides a good range of images from both the Page and the McClelland and Stewart/Stokes bindings and dust jackets. Anne of Green Gables, in the first-edition form that was reprinted for many years, is especially visually attractive and desirable, even without its dust jacket. All of Page’s editions of Montgomery’s books, designed to conform with the first Anne, have this kind of aesthetic appeal as objects. The McClelland and Stewart/Frederick Stokes editions, produced after Montgomery shifted publishers in 1916, are nearly as beautiful as the Page books until the 1930s, when there was a shift to plain cloth bindings and most of the publisher’s artistic energy went into the ephemeral dust jackets.

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Quel bel objet! Toute lapidaire soit-elle, l’exclamation résume bien la rencontre de l’œil et du catalogue de l’exposition inaugurale de la Grande Bibliothèque de la Bibliothèque nationale du Québec (BNQ). Cette dernière, en collaboration avec les Presses de l’Université Laval (PUL), nous offre un livre d’une facture magnifique, richement illustré, agréable à manipuler et à feuilleter. Cent quatre-vingt-deux pages de pur délice visuel auxquelles la page couverture infographiée ne rend pas justice avec son texte aligné par le centre et attiré vers