the professionalization of writing in Britain between 1830 and 1880, translation studies, and postcolonial theory.

ADA SHARPE

Wilfrid Laurier University

Joel Silver. *Dr Rosenbach and Mr. Lilly: Book Collecting in a Golden Age*. New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press, 2011. 176 pp.; US \$49.95 ISBN 978158456295

As the primacy of the printed book retreats and the digital book ascends in popularity, the status of the future of book collecting is an issue and concern. Based on current models, some have envisioned that the physical book will only survive in the form of a finely crafted material object that will be expensive and collectible. One can also imagine the survival of the antiquarian and secondhand book trade, as books are sold or disposed of and replaced with electronic copies. But can one “collect” digital books? Improbably. For those who fret about the future of book collecting, Joel Silver’s well-documented, recent study focusing on the relationship of Dr A.S.W. Rosenbach and Mr Josiah K. Lilly Jr. will not dispel their fears; still, Silver transports the reader back in time to the golden age of book collecting in America, an era that arguably began at the beginning of the twentieth century and ended after the Second World War.

At the time, Josiah Lilly (1893-1966) met A.S.W. Rosenbach (1876-1952), Abe or Dr. or “Rosy,” to his many friends, Rosenbach was regarded as the most eminent antiquarian bookseller in America. Born in Philadelphia, Rosenbach idled away many of his hours in his uncle’s rare book shop. Moses Polock was among the first rare book dealers to specialize in Americana, and after Moses died in 1903 Rosenbach purchased much of his uncle’s Americana collection at auction in 1904. Rosenbach’s family was insistent that he attend University, and he graduated with a PhD in English Literature in 1901. During his Penn years, he amassed an encyclopedic knowledge of early English literature, which he twinned with his natural gift as a bookseller, raconteur, and man of taste and pleasure. In 1903, Rosenbach and his older brother Philip launched The Rosenbach Company on fashionable Walnut Street in Center City Philadelphia. Philip managed the furnishings and framing department and on the

second floor his brother sold rare books to an increasingly prestigious clientele.

During the first three decades of the twentieth century, Rosenbach counted among his clients some of the wealthiest book collectors in America. His "A" client list included Henry Folger, Henry Huntington, and J.P. Morgan. Through his knowledge of the trade and as opportunities arose, Rosenbach helped acquire some of their greatest treasures, which included Gutenberg Bibles and Shakespeare folios. Locally, Rosenbach helped build the personal libraries of Harry Elkins Weidner (who went down with the Titanic), Lessing Rosenwald, John Stetson, and A. Edward Newton, among others.

Josiah Kirby Lilly Jr. was the grandson of the founder of the Lilly Pharmaceutical Company based in Indianapolis, Indiana, and he was the last family member to manage the company. Lilly was also a born collector who on his occasional business trips to New York in the 1920s acquired bound sets of standard works. He learned about book collecting in part from reading A. Edward Newton's articles on book collecting that appeared in the *Saturday Evening Post* and the *Atlantic Monthly*. For Newton, book collecting was a vocation to aspire to, and he also promulgated the notion that rare books were a financial investment, which may have been an aspect of collecting that particularly appealed to Lilly, who would become a member of the Grolier Club (and his membership in the club would result in his expanding the scope of his collecting). It is perhaps Newton's references to Rosenbach in his magazine articles and *The Amenities of Book Collecting* (1918) that prompted Lilly to approach Rosenbach about helping him with this expansion of his collection. The two would meet for the first time in January 1929.

Lilly did not possess the wealth of a Huntington or Morgan but he was sufficiently well off to ask Rosenbach, in the early 1930s, to assist him in building his own set of the Grolier 100, or the "one hundred books famous in English Literature." Among Lilly's first major purchases from Rosenbach was Grolier 2, John Gower's *Confessio Amantis* (1483). In total Rosenbach sold Lilly seventeen Grolier 100 titles. As Rosenbach discovered, Lilly could neither be easily charmed – the latter preferred to maintain a formal business relationship with Rosenbach – nor did he freely open his wallet to the bookseller on spec. Lilly was a finicky collector insisting on the best copies available. When the condition was in doubt, Rosenbach agreed, occasionally, to buy back from Lilly a copy of a book in poor condition if a better copy surfaced on the market. Rosenbach was

always eager to make a sale. Over the course of two decades, Lilly purchased a hundred titles from Rosenbach for a total of \$232,000.00 (approximately \$400,000.00 USD in today's currency).

In the latter half of the 1930s, Lilly again approached Rosenbach with another list, A. Edward Newton's 100 Good Novels that appeared in his 1928 collection of essays, *The Book Collecting Game*. In contrast to the Grolier 100, Newton's list included American literature, which the eclectic Lilly had been buying for a number of years, especially works on the American Midwest and Indiana. During the early 1940s, Lilly also challenged Rosenbach to create a list of "Rosenbach's 100 great American books." However, as their business relationship drew to a close in the late 1940s, it ended on a note of disappointment for Lilly, who had asked Rosenbach to bid on the "best" copy of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* that Rosenbach had seen. Lilly lost out in his bid. Another trophy, *The Bay Psalm Book*, would also elude Lilly, who would see his bookseller Rosenbach's fame sore after the Second World War. The well-known bookseller's personal collection of books would eventually be donated through his foundation to the Rosenbach Museum and Library. Rosenbach would also endow a distinguished lecture series on bibliography, which is held annually at the University of Pennsylvania. Silver writes a book that confirms that Rosenbach's legacy endures as the greatest bookseller of the twentieth century.

Although Lilly referred to himself, self-deprecatingly, as the "Busted Bibliophile from Indiana" in a series of ten self-published lists of his collection in the early 1930s, Silver illustrates that Lilly's ambitions as a book collector were expansive and impressive as well. Rosenbach was not the only bookseller from whom Lilly purchased books for his library. Indeed, his surviving archive at the Lilly Library in Bloomington, Indiana, comprises six thousand items, many of them correspondence with numerous booksellers. In 1955, Lilly donated his collection, 17,000 volumes and 20,000 manuscripts, to Indiana University: these would become the University's foundational collection housed in the Lilly Library. Silver is to be congratulated for this detailed microscopic study of the relationship between Rosenbach and Lilly. While the golden age of book collecting may have waned, this book reminds us of the importance of the relationship between bookseller and book collector.

DAVID MCKNIGHT

Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania