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Library Notes: Selected Acquisitions [v. 2, no. 2]

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Selected Acquisitions

Moby Dick

The libraries have lately acquired the Arion Press edition of *Moby Dick*, published in 1979. This treatment of Herman Melville's classic novel is illustrated with one hundred woodcuts by the New England artist and illustrator Barry Moser. The nearly six hundred pages of the text were composed by hand, and a special font of Leviathan Capitals was designed for titling. The work, over two years in press, is printed on a specially commissioned light blue handmade paper. The binding is in full blue morocco. This is the most significant publication of one of America's foremost private presses, the successor to the famous Grabhorn Press of San Francisco. It is an appropriate and welcome addition to our book arts collection.

Ansel Adams

Yosemite and the Range of Light, published in 1979 by the New York Graphic Society, was recently added to the holdings of the libraries. This book is a collection of photographs by Ansel Adams. The images presented in *Yosemite and the Range of Light* span the years from the 1920s to the 1970s and portray the photographer's intimate involvement with the landscape of the Sierra Nevada throughout his adult life. The one hundred and sixteen photographs reproduced in the book, including views of Mount Williamson, Washburn Point and Waterwheel Falls, document natural patterns and dramatic vistas free from human presence. The images all display the consistent sharpness of detail which characterizes Adam's photographic style. The book was designed by Lance Hidy.

Illustrated Books from British Presses

Three illustrated books of extraordinary interest to students both of art and of literature have come to the libraries via the Martin S. Ackermann Foundation of New York and the University of

Kentucky Art Museum. Perhaps of chief importance is copy 112 (out of 275) of the Ganymede edition of Shakespeare's *King Lear*, produced in London in 1963. This book is illustrated with thirty-five original lithographs by the Austrian expressionist Oskar Kokoschka, who has signed the work in pencil. The illustrations for the entire edition were printed from stones by J. E. Wolfensberger in Zurich. The text was composed by hand in the historic types imported in the seventeenth century for the Oxford University Press by Dr. John Fell, and the printing itself was carried out by the press. The heavy paper stock was hand made especially for this edition by the foremost English mill, J. Barcham Green of Maidstone, Kent. The book is in folio and handsomely bound in full vellum.

The second illustrated book is Samuel Taylor Coleridge's *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, with twelve aquatints by the Irish-born artist and stage-designer Patrick Proctor. The book was designed and printed by Sebastian Carter, of the well-known Rampant Lions Press, in London. The graphic treatment of the poems is carried out largely in blues and grays. Both the text of Coleridge's literary ballad and his shoulder notes are presented in gray ink in types of contrasting size and weight. The aquatints are predominantly somber and monochromatic, but there are also examples with surprising displays of bright color. The book is bound in decorated paper boards with a black cloth spine and slipcase.

The third illustrated book is yet another English limited edition, this one published in 1978 by Circle Press. Its text is the "Prologue" to Geoffrey Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, and the illustrations by Ronald King are imaginative silk screen graphics exploiting both medieval heraldry and African ceremonial masks to capture in color and line something of the character of Chaucer's diverse pilgrims. Our copy contains one additional silk screen print suggested by the qualities of Chaucer's Manciple. The book is bound in blue cloth and placed in a blue cloth-covered slipcase.

Baskerville Imprint

Another notable acquisition is a copy of the three-volume edition of the works of William Congreve, the English dramatist, published at Birmingham in 1761 by John Baskerville. Congreve is one of the chief eighteenth-century playwrights, best remembered for *The Way of the World*, and Baskerville occupies an important transitional

position in the development of printing and typography. Baskerville designed types very different from the popular Dutch "Old Style" letters of his day and began a course toward the more distinctively "thick and thin" shaded characters which culminated in the typefaces of the Italian printer Bodoni. He was responsible also for other innovations, particularly in the preparation of ink and paper, and his books, in Macaulay's words, "went forth to astonish the librarians of Europe." We particularly welcome this distinguished set, the gift of Judge Raymond E. Bossmeyer of Louisville.

Manuscripts

Several manuscript acquisitions will enlarge the research interests of our holdings and at the same time show our commitment to gathering the papers of Kentucky authors. Six letters by the Louisville author Alice Hegan Rice have been added in one lot. These were written during the 1920s to St. John Adcock, editor of *The Bookman*, an English literary magazine, and relate to a sketch of her by Vivian Hemerdine which was published in that journal. Another recent edition comprises manuscripts of three volumes of verse by the Kentucky poet Madison Cawein. Also included are a series of questions given to Cawein by Otto Rothert, author of *The Story of a Poet: Madison Cawein*. Cawein's responses are written beneath the questions and provide some of the detail used by Rothert in his biography of the poet.

—James D. Birchfield