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Friends of the Connecticut College Library

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Autumn Newsletter 1998

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1998 Friends of the Connecticut College Library Autumn Newsletter

RARE 18TH CENTURY NEW LONDON VOLUME ACQUIRED

Thanks to the sharp eyes of a Friend, we have added an important volume to our considerable holdings of colonial New London printing: the 1754 "Acts & Laws" printed by Timothy Green. It had been highlighted in a *Sunday Times* announcement of a sale at Branford's Blackstone Memorial Library, and we were able to snap it up with a telephone call after being assured that it was in very good condition.

Two Timothy Greens and other members of the family served as official printers for His Majesty's Colony of Connecticut, and later for the State of Connecticut. During the tenure of Hazel A. Johnson as College Librarian many examples of early New London printing were acquired and she became an authority on the subject. In 1978 - ten years after her retirement - the Bibliographical Society of American published her *Checklist of New London, Connecticut, Imprints 1709-1800*. The 492 pages of this monumental work list and describe 1,410 separate printed items: proclamations, laws, almanacs, pamphlets, lottery announcements, advertisements, newspapers, books, and, surprisingly, academic documents for Yale College.

Each act passed by the colonial assembly was printed by the Greens, and from time to time bound compilations were issued. The first of these appeared in 1709, and six more followed at intervals until 1784. The only difference between the 1784 volume and its pre-war companions is the change in the coat of arms on the title page from that of the King to that of the new State. With the 1754 volume our collection

(continued on back page)



WINTER EXHIBITION:

"BLACK & WHITE:

TWENTIETH CENTURY BOOK ILLUSTRATION"

Curated by Charles Price, Professor Emeritus of Art History
December 11, 1998 — February 4, 1999

This selection of books from the Special Collections displaying the art of wood engraving, wood cut, lithography, etching, pen and ink, and brush and ink, is highlighted by our recently acquired 1930 Lakeside Press edition of *Moby Dick*, lavishly illustrated by Rockwell Kent. Among other artists represented are Ludwig Bemelmans, Samuel Chamberlain, Antonio Frasconi, Clare Leighton, Leonard Baskin, Lynd Ward, Barry Moser, and Agnes Miller Parker. Shown above is Kent's drawing of Bennett Cerf's "Random House" which became the company logo after the first use of the name in the exhibited 1928 edition of Voltaire's *Candide*.



PRESERVING OUR WILLIAM MORRIS KELMSCOTT BOOKS

Until recently only four of the Library's 21 Kelmescott Press books were housed in the elegant cloth-covered boxes that libraries and collectors use to protect their rare volumes. With funds from the Eleanor Geisheimer Preservation Endowment, two book artisans have been commissioned to create boxes for the seventeen other Kelmescotts that are among the most prized items in our holdings of fine printing.

One of these artisans, Carolyn Chadwick '74, recently delivered nine beautifully made boxes from her studio in New York, and they now house the books for which each was custom fitted. Covered in burgundy, navy, charcoal, green, or wheat fabric, and identified by small square leather labels bearing gold-stamped titles, the new boxes not only protect their rare contents, but honor the arts and crafts ideals that William Morris so passionately promoted in his art, lectures, and writing. Ms. Chadwick teaches at the Center for the Book Arts in New York, and was on campus for the November 18 roundtable discussion held in conjunction with our fall exhibition, "Out of the Center: Artists' Books from the Center for Book Arts." The other eight Kelmescotts will soon be housed in boxes now being crafted by Barbara Blumenthal, a book artist in Northampton, Massachusetts.

The Friends of the
Connecticut College Library

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December, 1998

CHARLES E. SHAIN LIBRARY • DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL COLLECTIONS
CONNECTICUT COLLEGE

William Meredith

William Meredith's work spans six decades, includes more than a dozen collections, and has won such prestigious awards as the National Book Award and the Pulitzer Prize. The Charles E. Shain Library's William Meredith Web Site provides biographical, bibliographic, and critical information on one of America's most important contemporary poets and serves as a resource for scholars, students, and others interested in contemporary American literature.



Oil portrait by Don Swann, 1991

Acknowledgments | Chronology | Works | Criticism and Scholarship | The William Meredith Papers | Honors and Awards | Related Sites

WILLIAM MEREDITH WEBSITE INTRODUCED

<<http://www.conncoll.edu/meredith>>

We proudly announce the William Meredith website, the first of several that will describe and publicize each of our major special collections. The website was created by English major David Kieran, who spent eight weeks in the summer selecting material from the Meredith Papers and other library holdings and preparing the texts and illustrations to be displayed. The website is part of a larger academic project on Meredith that Kieran has undertaken with Professor of English George Willauer. Brian Rogers, curator of the Meredith Papers, also participated in the project, which was headquartered in the Palmer Room. If you do not have access to the Internet access at home, please call Brian Rogers at 439-2654 to arrange a demonstration.

The website describes each of Meredith's books and reproduces many poems from them. Full-color reproductions of dustjackets and covers add graphic interest, and the site is also illustrated with photographs. Other components include a chronology of Meredith's career and a bibliography of all known appearances of his poems in literary journals, magazines, and anthologies. Still under development is a section devoted to correspondence. Selected letters will show how Meredith influenced other poets and how poets talk to each other. A few may be seen now, as may President Clinton's congratulatory letter on the occasion of Meredith's 1997 National Book Award for *Effort at Speech*.

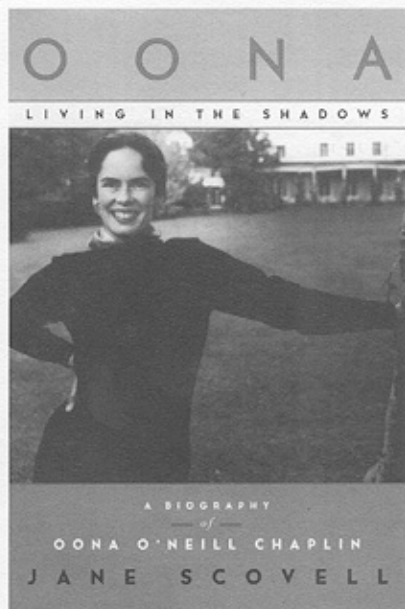
The Meredith website will always be a work in progress. For example, a new book to be added to the bibliography is *Tributes: Celebrating Fifty Years of the New York City Ballet*. This extraordinarily handsome example of bookmaking has a preface by Peter Martins, foreword by Mikhail Baryshnikov, and texts from various sources to accompany the many splendid illustrations. Meredith's poem "The Ballet" appears on page 38 ("In a cage of light, the splendid creatures. . ."), originally written for the City Ballet's 1962 souvenir book.

BIOGRAPHY OF OONA O'NEILL CHAPLIN PUBLISHED

In November Warner Books brought out *Oona: Life in the Shadows*, Jane Scovell's sympathetic and readable account of the life of Eugene O'Neill's daughter. An entire chapter is devoted to the correspondence between Oona and O'Neill biographer Louis Sheaffer. Ms. Scovell had been given access to these letters by Sheaffer himself several years before they were purchased for the Library with Friends funds. (The letters were featured in the January, 1998, *Winter Newsletter*.) Ms. Scovell visited the Sheaffer-O'Neill Collection in 1997, selected many possible photographs and ultimately chose thirteen — more than from any other source.

From January 6 to 11, 1999, the Eugene O'Neill Society will sponsor an international O'Neill conference in Bermuda, where Oona was born in 1925. While living at Brook Farm in Ridgefield, Connecticut, the O'Neills decided to spend the winter of 1924 in Bermuda; Oona was born the following May and later that year her parents bought Spithead, a waterfront estate. By 1927 O'Neill's affair with Carlotta Monterey was under way and late that year he left Bermuda alone for New York, never to return. At their divorce in 1929 Agnes retained the right to live at Spithead, and the house was used off and on for some twenty years by her, and later by Oona's brother Shane and his family, until it could no longer be maintained and was sold. A highlight of the January conference will be a reception at Spithead given by the current owners.

Among the many papers to be given at the conference will be one by Brian Rogers on the insights into the life and character of Oona Chaplin that emerge from her correspondence with Louis Sheaffer between 1969 and 1985.



Oona Chaplin in front of the Manoir de Ban, Vevey, Switzerland, where the Chaplins lived after leaving the U.S. in 1952.

SEPTEMBER 17 LECTURE CO-SPONSORED WITH THE SOUND LAB FOUNDATION

Members of the Friends and contributors to the Sound Lab Foundation, along with many students, staff, faculty and visitors, made up an audience of nearly 200 for the first annual lecture sponsored jointly by the Friends and the Foundation. *Wall Street Journal* writer and author G. Pascal Zachary addressed a capacity crowd with "Imagining the Future: Mind Machines, Military Research, and the Conquest of Information Overload." Zachary is the author of *Endless Frontier*, a 1997 biography of Vannevar Bush, the great physicist and engineer who had ties with the New London Underwater Sound Laboratory in its early days.

For 53 years the Friends of the Library has been a link between the College and the surrounding community. The new partnership with the Sound Lab Foundation strengthens this linkage, broadens the scope of our programming and provides yet another forum where area residents and members of the campus community may join to consider issues of mutual interest. In general, the series will focus on aspects of the intersection of science and society — a subject large enough to allow for a wide variety of lectures as the series progresses.

of 18th century "Acts & Laws" is complete except for the very rare 1709 issue. Only one copy survives in New England, at Yale, and is incomplete. For her Checklist Miss Johnson examined a complete copy at the historic Library Company of Philadelphia, founded by Benjamin Franklin in 1731 and now a major research collection of rare Americana. A contribution toward the purchase of the 1754 Acts & Laws was given anonymously by a Friend in memory of Miss Johnson, who died in 1993.

Interspersed among the numerous laws and proclamations in the Johnson bibliography are colorful titles of pamphlets and books that comprised the rest of the Greens' printing business. The following are typical, offering a glimpse of the day-to-day concerns of 18th century New Londoners: "The State of the Mohegan Fields, lying between the Land granted to New-London on the South, and Norwich on the North in Her Majesties Colony of Connecticut" (1715), "A Wedding Ring, Fit for the Finger: Or, The Salve of Divinity on the Sore of Humanity - With directions to those Men that want Wives, how to choose them; and to those Women that have Husbands, how to use them" (a 1769 wedding sermon), and "Youth's Warning Piece: The Tragicall History of George Barnwell, who Was Undone by a Strumpet" (1770). Update the language and one would not have to look far to find the same topics in today's newspapers or magazines. A spring exhibition of 18th century New London printing is being planned.



"Montagnola di Lugano" woodcut by Frans Masereel from *The Officina Bodoni: The Operation of a Hand-press During the First Six Years of its Work* Paris and New York, 1929

From the Library exhibition:
"Black & White: Twentieth Century
Book Illustration"
December 11, 1998 - February 4, 1999

PLEASE JOIN THE FRIENDS OF THE CONNECTICUT COLLEGE LIBRARY!

Your 1999 membership, new or renewed, may now be sent in with the enclosed card and envelope.

A Friends group such as ours exists essentially for two reasons. It is a vehicle whereby one may affiliate with a library in order to use its resources, and it is a source of financial support that enables the library to offer programs such as the September 17 lecture described earlier, enrich collections, mount exhibitions, or enhance its character and visibility in other ways. Since 1945, when our group was founded during the presidency of Rosemary Park, it has sponsored many lectures and exhibitions and has provided funding for hundreds of book and manuscript acquisitions that have transformed this library from a very good one to one which is outstanding by any measure: the richness of its collections, the effectiveness of its services, and its embrace of information technology in the service of liberal learning.

We hope that by affiliating with our library — and the College's new Information Services department of which it is the historic core and symbol — you will feel that it is yours as well, whether you use Shain Library or Greer Music Library in Cummings Arts Center. We want you to share our pride in one of southern New England's finest research and information centers. And if you are unfamiliar with the computerized catalogue, which continues to evolve and to offer an even greater range of resources, please do not hesitate to ask a reference librarian for guidance.

— Brian Rogers