

THE  
BISHOP  
COLLECTION  
– OF –  
THOMAS BIRD MOSHER  
&

THE MOSHER  
BOOKS



❧ Part One ❧

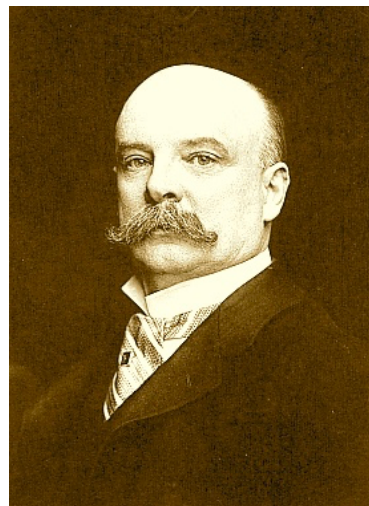


# Collector's Introduction

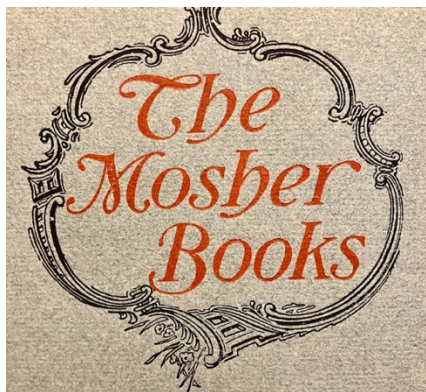


## Focus of the Collection

Thomas Bird Mosher was a remarkable publisher of *belles lettres*, literally ‘beautiful’ or ‘fine’ writing including fiction, poetry, prose-poems, drama, and essays. “The Mosher Books” imprint made Portland, Maine a mecca for lovers of fine literature in beautiful format, and known internationally in England, Australia and even India. This prominent New Englander and his publishing program are the perpetual focus of the Bishop-Mosher Collection.



Born in Biddeford, Maine, Mosher operated out of Portland, Maine from 1891-1923. Although technically a trade publisher, he assiduously conducted his publishing program more along the lines of a private press, selecting only those writings that impacted him personally and which he wanted to share with others. Broadly speaking, his career success entailed publishing 331 new Mosher editions, 338 reprints of those editions, 61 privately printed titles under the rubric “The Mosher Press,” 20 annual volumes of the long-standing literary magazine, *The Bibelot*, and lastly 31 of his annual catalogues which some reviewers felt had the pretention of being books in themselves totaling altogether 783 publications. He championed the Pre-Raphaelites (e.g., William Morris, Swinburne, Dante Gabriel Rossetti), Oscar Wilde, Robert Louis Stevenson, Walter Pater, Fiona Macleod (William Sharp) and many others including Walt Whitman, Ernest Dowson, and Richard Jefferies. He was a major proponent of the *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*. The publications were spread across fourteen different series which were procured through mail order or select bookstores.



## Collection Beginnings & Collecting Methods

This Bishop-Mosher Collection started in 1985 by current Grolier Club member, Philip R. Bishop. It began with one small volume found at The Book Haven in Lancaster, PA: Richard Jefferies’ *Story of My Heart*. It first unlocked for me both the realm of American and English private press printing, and Mosher’s exquisite literary tastes. The full story was published in *The Richard Jefferies Society Journal* for June 2018, pp. 129-135.

Adventures in finding Mosher material included trips to New England and Mid-Atlantic booksellers. Fortuitously, I came upon a large glass-door bookcase filled with 600+ Mosher books at Cross Hill Books outside of Brunswick, Maine. After much deliberation, I bought the whole

collection en bloc which the dealer then miraculously delivered to my doorstep in Pennsylvania. That did it. I was totally and irreversibly hooked. What's more, I now had a roadmap to guide me in my collecting: Benton Hatch's *A Check List of the Publications of Thomas Bird Mosher of Portland, Maine* (Gehenna Press, 1966) which came with the collection! Many of my quests and successes are chronicled in my over 900 pages of book collecting memoirs.

Beyond bookshop hopping, ordering from catalogues, having quotes sent following phone calls, and attending book fairs, I intermixed making connections with fellow Mosher Books collectors. I corresponded for three years with the great Mosher collector, Norman Strouse, until his death. I met up with now longtime friend Jean-François Vilain of Philadelphia. Together we mounted a Mosher exhibition at Temple University in 1992. Then there was Dr. William E. Fredeman of Abbotsford, Canada, referred to as "The Father of North American Pre-Raphaelite Studies." I was in weekly email contact with him about all things Mosher. He would eventually come to write the important Introduction to my *Thomas Bird Mosher—Pirate Prince of Publishers* co-published by Oak Knoll Press and The British Library in 1998. Then too there was Mrs. Vladimir Sokolowski from whom I purchased the entire Sokolowski Mosher collection formed over years by her concert pianist husband.

As for finding extensive manuscript holdings, it was from David Turner in Portland, ME that I purchased the single largest archive of Mosher manuscript material ever offered to me. From Francis O'Brien of Portland I purchased an important archive of Mosher material salvaged from Mosher's personal library, items with which the auction house Parke-Bernet Galleries didn't want to be bothered with in 1948—materials which would have been forever lost had he not saved them, and patiently waited many years for "the right" collector to come along.

Enter the Internet. Mega-search sites, automatic background searching, and daily on-line searches, and my Mosher collecting would enter what has now become commonplace. Social media websites have also added a dimension that didn't exist before, allowing one to broadly cast a net across hundreds, even thousands of book sites, collectors, dealers, libraries, and auction houses. When Covid hit, the reliance on these measures became even more pronounced and continue unabated to this day. The older methods are still a part of the game, but the on-line searching for material has expanded book and *mss* hunting exponentially.

### **Purpose of the Collection**

The aim continues to be to assemble a major research collection, in fact the quintessential collection that would have unquestionable value to independent and academic researchers. This was not a task of just gathering books--which is far from the art of collecting--, but to organize a collection of refined scope, structure, and incredible depth. It continues to be made available to scholars on a request basis. Bishop assists scholars the world over in providing whatever is contained in the collection which might be relevant to their research. At present a paper for The Oscar Wilde Society's *The Wildean*, now under peer review, is an example of a request that emanated from the foremost Oscar Wilde collector in England who now holds a substantial collection of Mosher imprints on Oscar Wilde.

The collection has become the most comprehensive and finest of its kind in the world, completing what may be considered the "triumvirate" of the most important Mosher Press collections ever

assembled. The Bishop-Mosher Collection now exists alongside (and in many ways surpasses) the great Norman Strouse Collection housed at the University of San Francisco's Gleeson Library (augmented by *mss* material from one of Mosher's sons, Harrison Hulme Mosher), and that of the Salerno-Wurtzberger curated collection at Arizona State University-Tempe's Hayden Library (augmented by *mss* material from Mosher's other son, Thomas Bird Mosher, Jr.). Offsetting these family donated materials, the Bishop-Mosher Collection contains unique and highly personal *mss* material from the publisher's secretly kept office files now augmented with hundreds of letters to/from/about Mosher; binders full of ship documents; several moderate sized sub-archives; a sizeable unpublished book on Mosher's early years (including the researcher's notes and correspondence between Mosher's office assistant and the biographer); photographs, paintings, and ephemera; and a host of pertinent references on, about, or specifically mentioning Mosher.

### **Broad Highlights**

The Bishop-Mosher Collection contains over 5,000 catalogued items subsumed under all of the general highlights below. Specific highlights are presented in the Bibliographical List.

(1) **Contains 99% of Mosher's publications**, in their varying paper and Japan vellum states, reprint editions, and special editions (including private printings), all discriminately chosen and upgraded over the years from very good to fine condition.

(2) Achieved a **modern record of acquiring 43 examples of "The Mosher Books" printed on "pure vellum."** No modern collector or institution has assembled such. Historically, only Mosher himself (47 vellums), Henry W. Poor (46), and Gertrude Cowdin (46), had larger vellum holdings, which are now widely dispersed. In modern times Bishop has passed Norman Strouse's milestone of 32. Such details are tracked in Bishop's continuously updated census of Mosher's vellum printings.

(3) The collection currently has **over 450 of Mosher's imprints in specially hand-bound leather bindings by professional and amateur binders world-wide**, uniquely demonstrating the desirability of the Mosher imprint for hand-binding. No collection has acquired even 15% of that figure, nor has garnered more outstanding exhibition bindings to the extent of the Bishop-Mosher Collection.

(4) Going a long way to show insights into Mosher's literary collecting, there are **535 books from Mosher's 8,500 volume personal library** (including many association or unusual copies). No collection has assembled even 5% of this level of these holdings. The whole of Mosher's personal library is catalogued in the Bishop-Mosher collection, currently 159 double-column pages of annotated entries.

(5) This is the only Mosher collection to have a **substantial number of books marked and edited (some dis-assembled) by Mosher himself for his printers**. There are four known examples in other collections, but the Bishop-Mosher Collection contains 40.

(6) This is the only Mosher collection to include a **substantial number of hand-illuminated copies of The Mosher Books**.

(7) A large bookcase is filled with **hundreds of pages of manuscripts and correspondence** all archivally preserved in binders.

(8) This is also the largest collection of books published 1924-1941 by Mosher's successor, Flora Macdonald Lamb, under the Mosher Press imprint following Mosher's death in 1923.

### Collection's Further Evolution:

I am always upgrading the imprints and acquiring new manuscript material, association copies, small archives, and even whole collections--portions of which are then filtered into the collection. Will seek to mount an exhibition based on the collection. Seek to publish the collected letters of Mosher (have over 500 thus far in database), and the Library of TBM. Also exploring new sub-collections like the books printed by Mosher's primary press operator. Also working to further build the Mosher Press website, continuing research using the collection. I am always open to completely unexpected "finds" which continue to fuel my passion for collecting all things Mosher to assist in telling the Mosher story.

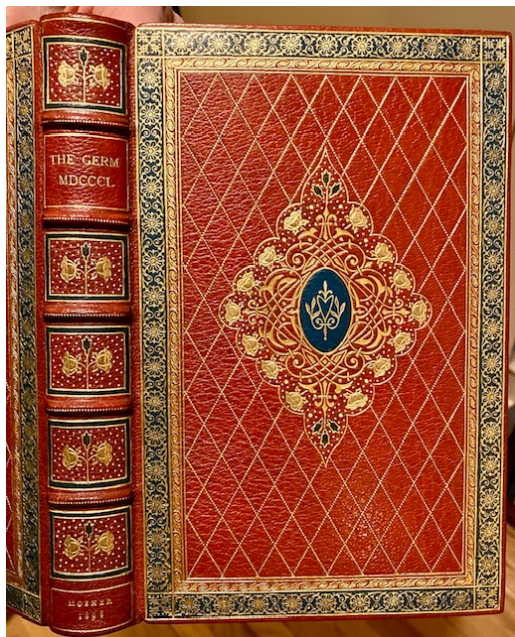
---

## Bibliography of Representative Items

---

### MOSHER'S VELLUM COPY in MOUNTENEY BINDING

1. Rossetti, Dante Gabriel, et. al. *THE GERM: Thoughts Towards nature in Poetry, Literature, and Art. MDCCCL* (Portland, ME: Thomas Bird Mosher, 1998). 9" x 6"; xxxi, 224, [16] pp. Thomas Bird Mosher's copy #4 of 4 printed on vellum and signed by Mosher with proofs of the cover design by Charles Ricketts. Ornatly gilt-tooled full orange mahogany morocco with central Persian-like lozenge, three-color onlays, all edges gilt; ornate tooled dentelles, royal blue moiré silk pastedowns and endpapers, all by Leonard Mounteney between 1948-1950. Housed in custom quarter leather clamshell case by James Tapley of Sarasota, FL. All in fine condition. Bishop 132, p. 357, color plate 12.



---

No single item in the collection pushes more collecting buttons than does this vellum copy of Mosher's publication of the seminal Pre-Raphaelite text. Not only is this copy the ultra-rare "black orchid" of Mosher's publications, but it represents a series of

firsts: the **first** reprint ever of the important British publication, the **first** American edition, the **first** book Mosher had printed on real vellum, and the **first** book printed on vellum in the State of

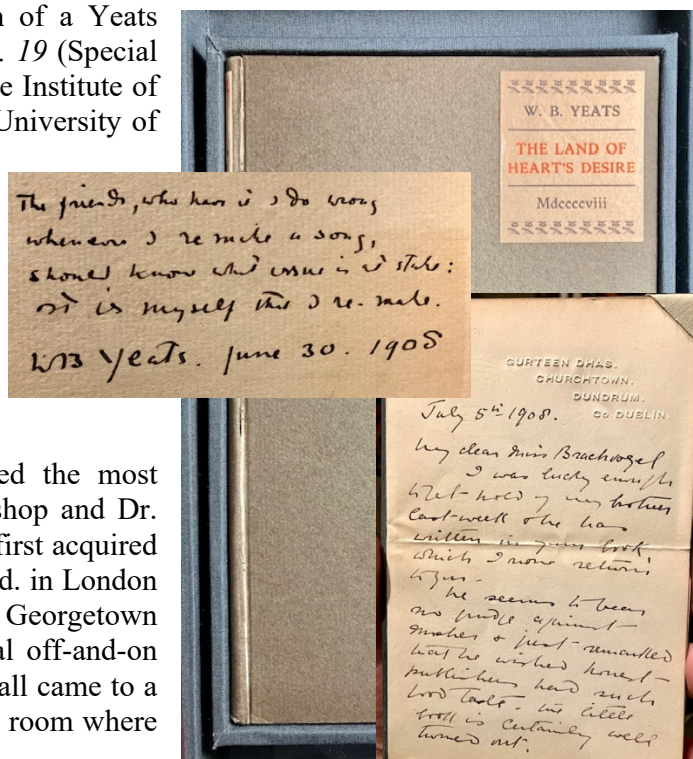
Maine. This was the publisher's own copy sold at the 1948 Parke-Bernet sale of his library and straightaway put into a fine binding by one of America's finest binders of the 20th Century, Leonard Mounteney. The book's ownership is shrouded in mystery, until it was found in an adventure of book collecting chronicled by Rebecca Rego Barry in her *Rare Books Uncovered—True Stories of Fantastic Finds in Unlikely Places* (Minneapolis, MN: Voyageur Press, 2015) in lucky chapter #7 “Leather-Bound Beauty in a Cowboy Outpost,” a copy of which is inscribed to the collector by the author and by the writer of the Introduction, Nicholas Basbanes. The collector's on-line posting of his article “Dating Two Bindings by Master Binder, Leonard Mounteney on Mosher Press Vellum Books” (April 15, 2019 on the Mosher Press website) led to the family of the binder contacting me and subsequently turning over Mounteney's own scrapbook of his life's work which is now also in the Bishop-Mosher Collection. This truly spectacular book deserves **first** ranking in this bibliographical list.

### INSCRIBED BY WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

**2.** Yeats, William Butler. *The Land of Heart's Desire*. Portland, ME: Thomas Bird Mosher, 1908. 7" x 4.5"; vi, 33, [1] pp. Inscribed by Yeats: “*The friends that have it I do wrong | When ever I remake a song, | Should know what issue is at stake; | It is myself that I remake | W B Yeats June 30, 1908.*” Accompanied by a 2 ½ page letter dated July 5, 1908 from Lily Yates (Yates' sister) to Clara Brachvogel of New York for whom Lily personally secured this inscribed copy. Together housed in a custom designed cloth clamshell case with drawers by Domonique Alesi, including the inscribed book, the letter, an article on the letter and book, and miscellaneous material related to this acquisition. Front board splitting from spine, else VG-Fine. Bishop 186.6

This extraordinary rare association copy was researched and explained in Philip Bishop's article: “My dear Mis Brachvogel...A MS Version of a Yeats Quatrain” in *Yeats's Mask: Yeats Annual No. 19* (Special Issue). London: OpenBook Publishers and the Institute of English Studies School of Advanced Study-University of London, 2013. It is one of two known manuscript copies (other at Yale) which date prior to this important poem's publication, and the only one in a Mosher publication. It helps to establish the complicated story between Mosher and Yeats, and the poem itself is ideally suited to Mosher's edition of *The Land of Heart's Desire* and Yeats' “agreement” to let Mosher publish it.

The acquisition of this material involved the most excruciating bargaining session between Bishop and Dr. Paul F. Betz of Georgetown University who first acquired the book and letter from Bernard Quaritch Ltd. in London (1986), and later displayed in Betz's 2004 Georgetown exhibition “Professor and Collector.” Cordial off-and-on light negotiations ensued over the years, but all came to a feverish pitch in a Holiday Inn-Rosslyn hotel room where



Bishop was staying for the Washington Book Fair on May 5, 2011. Never before or since would this kind of two-hour, gut-wrenching session ever be experienced by me, leaving at least this collector completely frazzled and shaking. According to Professor Betz, “Our negotiations... were great fun! -- and, to me, the outcome was unclear until the last moment.” (Betz to Bishop, August 25, 2011). Indeed, and totally nerve racking on my side.

---

## INSIGHT INTO MOSHER’S FRIENDSHIPS & PUBLISHING

### 3. The Mosher/Wiksell Archive

Archive of material revealing the close friendship between Thomas Bird Mosher and Gustav Percival Wiksell spanning the years 1904-1915. The archive, purchased directly from the Wiksell family, includes numerous letters of correspondence, pictures, postcards, trial printed pages, Walt Whitman Fellowship related material, publisher’s announcements, printer’s ephemera, printer’s proofs of Mosher’s Whitman publications and of *The Babelot*, manuscript write-ups for publications, inscribed presentation copies of The Mosher Books, and inscribed copies of books from Mosher’s to Wiksell’s library. Fine condition.

Wiksell on left →



By profession, Dr. Gustav Percival Wiksell (1863-1923) was a dentist in Boston, but his activities outside of this career are what drew him into Mosher’s orbit. Wiksell held offices in the Walt Whitman Fellowship (including president), and he was very close, even intimate, with Horace Traubel who was a member of Whitman’s inner circle, a Whitman literary executor, and chronicler of Whitman’s life in the extensive *Walt Whitman in Camden* series. Mosher was also good friends with Traubel, and so this small circle of Whitman comradeship was a natural for Mosher who likewise was a member of the Walt Whitman Fellowship, and who published a number of Whitman titles including the great facsimile of the 1855 edition of *Leaves of Grass* (1919, with memorial tribute by Traubel) and Traubel’s compilation *The Book of Heavenly Death* (1905). As one might imagine, there is much shared throughout this

archive revolving around Wiksell, Traubel and Mosher giving a particularly keen insight into their relationships and into Mosher’s publishing practices.

The Bishop-Mosher Collection contains several extensive sub-archives in its overall archive holdings: the Mosher-Marks archive, and the Mosher-Pratt book seller archive purchased through Carmen Valentino, folio scrapbooks and “Mark Twain” scrapbooks from the Mosher’s publishing office on Exchange Street in Portland, Maine; all being primary resources from Mosher’s hidden archive under lock-and-key and taken by his office assistant upon his death on August 31, 1923.

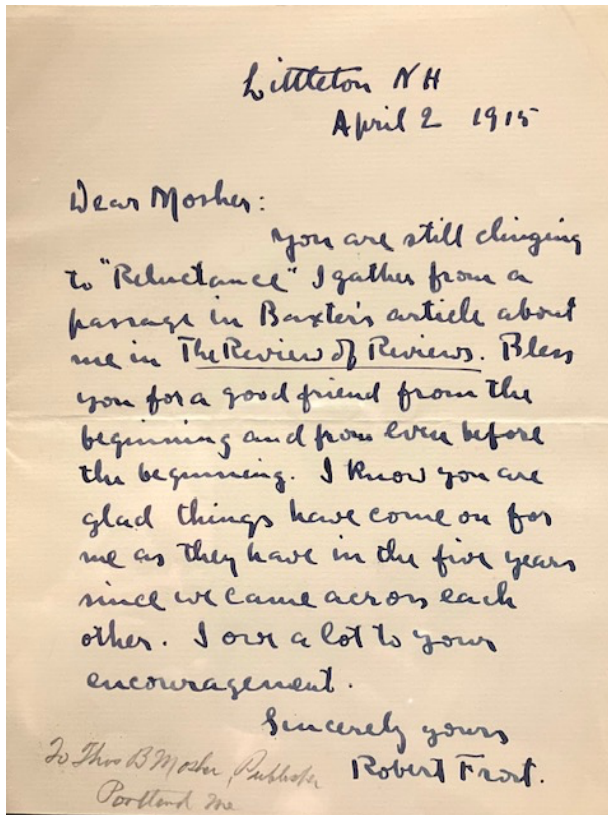
---

## ROBERT'S FROST'S FRIENDSHIP & INDEBTEDNESS

4. (ALs) FROST, Robert. **Autograph letter signed.** Littleton, NH: dated April 2, 1915. One sheet of laid paper (10" x 6 1/2") folded once to make four pages and written on one or those pages. This Frost to Mosher Als inquires about his poem "Reluctance" which Mosher had purchased from Frost for \$25 in 1912, and thanks him for his friendship and support "*from even before the beginning.*" "*I know you are glad things have come on for me as they have in the five years since we came across each other,*" Frost writes, adding "*I owe a lot to your encouragement.*" Fine condition.



This letter in Frost's holograph can be looked upon as a fine summation of the Frost/Mosher relationship. Frost's poem, "Reluctance," appeared on p. 26 in the 1913 issue of "The Mosher Books" catalogue. It would be the only poem Mosher would ever publish by Frost. That wasn't to



say that Frost didn't try multiple times to get Mosher to bring out his first book, *A Boy's Will* which eventually was published in London by David Nutt. Mosher's reluctance has never been fully understood or explained, but throughout their correspondence he never accepted Frost's plea. I rather wish he had. Regardless, Frost knew the debt he owed Mosher, and so this letter was sent to Mosher: "*Littleton NH | April 2 1915 | Dear Mosher: | You are still clinging | to "Reluctance" I gather from a | passage in Baxter's article\* about | me in The Review of Reviews. Bless | you for [being] a good friend from the | beginning and from even before | the beginning. I know you are | glad things have come on for | me as they have in the five years | since we came across each | other. I owe a lot to your | encouragement. | Sincerely yours, | Robert Frost.*" The Bishop-Mosher Collection contains hundreds of letters to, or concerning Mosher.

\* Baxter, Sylvester. "New England's New Poet" in *The American Review of Reviews-Monthly Illustrated*. Vol. LI, No. 4. NY: The Review of Reviews Co., April 1915, p. 432.

*"I am well pleased with your book [Modern Love, 1891]. The composition and press work are well done." --Theodore Low De Vinne*

(Several letters from De Vinne to Mosher are in the collection)



## THE QUINTESSENTIAL VELLUM COPY BOUND BY MAILLARD

5. Rossetti, Dante Gabriel. *POEMS* (Portland, ME: Mosher, 1902). 8 ¾" x 7 ¼"; 2 leaves, *lxxxi*, 338 pp, portrait frontispiece. Copy No. 2 of 4 printed on Roman vellum, signed by the publisher; from the Quarto Series. Bound at the Club Bindery



1905, and further signed by Léon Maillard, Finisher. A superb light brown levant morocco “La Flore Ornamentale” binding with wide gilt pointillé borders on the covers as a dense background to an array of horse-chestnut leaves and nuts; plain center panels each surmounted by a dragonfly. Spine with prominent bands, highly ornate panels carrying through the design and pointillé work of the covers, but adding two ladybugs at head and tail panels. All borders inlaid with bands of what was called “old blue.” Plain leather doublures of same color as covers. All page edges gilt. The Henry William Poor copy with his oval leather bookplate (later John Quinn / Walter M. Hill / Helen Davis Stibolt). Entry No. 115 was exhibited as part of The Grolier Club’s *AN EXHIBITION OF SOME OF THE LATEST ARTISTIC BINDINGS DONE AT THE CLUB BINDERY* (NY, April 26-May

12, 1906). Also see the auction catalogue of The Library of Henry W. Poor, Part V, lot 955. Fine condition. Bishop 294. ☞ See also Bishop’s lengthy on-line article “Léon Maillard’s La Flore Ornamentale’ Masterpiece...” on this binding at the Mosher Press website.

---

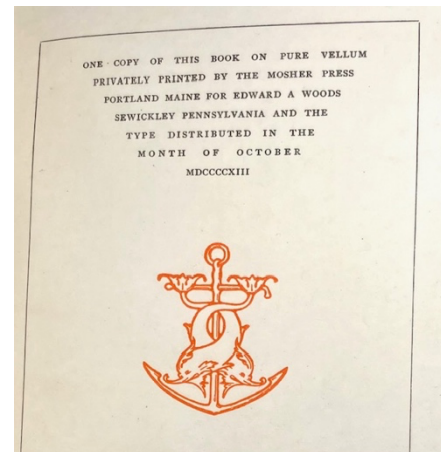
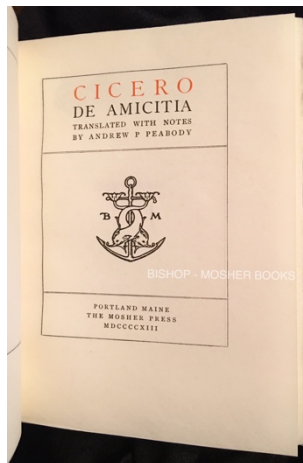
The above binding (on a “pure vellum” printing) represents one of several exhibition pieces that had been placed on display long before they entered the Bishop-Mosher Collection. This portion of the collection of over 450 hand-crafted bindings placed on Mosher imprints clearly represents the high regard that binders the world over, and their customers, placed on The Mosher Books. Assembling an extraordinarily large sub-collection of fine bindings illustrates this point in a most pleasing and emphatic way! No other Mosher collector has ever even remotely approached assembling such tell-tale treasures except for the owner/commissioner of this binding on Rossetti’s *POEMS*: Henry William Poor. In modern times, it was Norman Strouse who was able to gather together a respectable host of exquisite bindings on Mosher books, but even his collection only selectively compares to what the Bishop-Mosher Collection more fully illustrates. The Mosher imprints were not only for readers, although that’s exactly who they were made for, but for choice collectors of fine literature and beautiful book production in the most handsome hand-crafted bindings possible. Add to this that some of these books so decorated were printed on the epitome of printers “papers,” pure vellum, and you have the making of a rare artifact meant to dazzle the senses.

## UNIQUE COPY ON VELLUM

**6.** Cicero, Marcus Tullius. *DE AMICITIA* ["On Friendship"]. Translated with notes by Andrew P. Peabody. Portland, ME: Mosher, privately printed, 1913). 7 1/2" x 5 5/8"; ix, 125, [1] pp. **Copy No. One of One** printed on Roman vellum. Bound Kelmscott style in Classic vellum with silk ties; in original slipcase. Printed in Chiswick "lined page" style and using Chiswick ornamentation. Bookplate of Edward A. Woods, insurance executive in the Pittsburgh, PA area, who yearly commissioned Mosher to print a book for Christmas. Fine condition. Bishop 82.



There were 450 printed on Van Gelder paper and 50 numbered copies on Japan vellum which Wood's distributed to friends, associates, and customers, but obviously this Copy #1 of 1 remained in Woods's possession with which the family parted only for the Bishop-Mosher Collection. It's an outstanding and quite sumptuous production in about as mint condition as one could ever hope for. But there is another reason why this is so important. The Bishop-Mosher Collection currently has 43 of Mosher's books printed on real vellum. That's more than any other modern collector or institution has ever assembled. Only the collections of Mosher himself, Henry William Poor, and Gertrude Cowdin had more, but those have all been dispersed following their deaths; however, even when they were alive, not one of them (including Mosher himself) could have potentially had a complete collection without having this copy of *De Amicitia*. So nobody anywhere could ever examine a Mosher *De Amicitia* printed on vellum except for what is now proudly in the Bishop-Mosher Collection. That's what "unique" will do for you!



*"Thomas Bird Mosher has shown conclusively that all fine bookmaking in this country is not confined to the great cities or famous publishers."*

*--The Boston Transcript, Dec. 24, 1894*

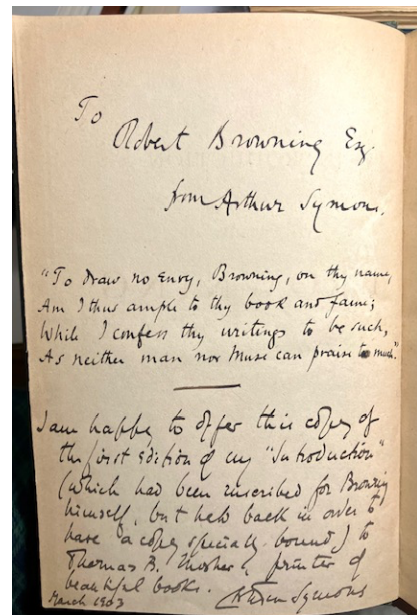
## FIRST INSCRIBED TO BROWNING, THEN TO MOSHER

7. (inscribed) Symons, Arthur. *An Introduction to the Study of Browning*. London/Paris/New York & Melbourne: Cassell & Company, Limited, 1886. First edition. 7 1/2" x 5 1/4"; vi, 216, [16] pp. Green beveled cloth with gilt title/author on spine. Inscribed to Robert Browning and then reinscribed to Thomas Bird Mosher. Bookplate of Thomas Bird Mosher. Fine condition.

This is a fine example of the rich depth of association copies from Mosher's library. The Bishop-Mosher Collection contains over 550 books from Mosher's library, but there are shelves upon shelves of inscribed copies. One particularly fine example is from one of Mosher's favorite authors, Arthur Symons. Symons sent Mosher a copy of his *An Introduction to the Study of Robert Browning* which Symons inscribed to Browning with this unpublished quatrain: "To Robert Browning Esq. from Arthur Symons. | To draw no envy, Browning, on thy name | Am I thus ample to thy book and fame; | While I confess thy writings to be such, | As neither man nor muse can praise too much." This inscribed copy, however, was held back, and then reinscribed



and sent to Mosher with the following sentiments. "I am happy to offer this copy of | the first edition of my 'Introduction' | (which had been inscribed for Browning | himself, but held back in order to | have a copy specially bound) to | Thomas B. Mosher, printer | of beautiful books. Arthur Symons | March 1903". A note on the quatrain for Browning was presented in *The Works of Arthur Symons: A Bibliographical Note* by T.B.M. (Portland, ME: Privately published by Mosher, 1912) which had reprinted this bibliography's appearance in the February 1912 issue of *The Bibelot* as a conclusion to Mosher's presentation of Symons' *A Prelude to Life*.

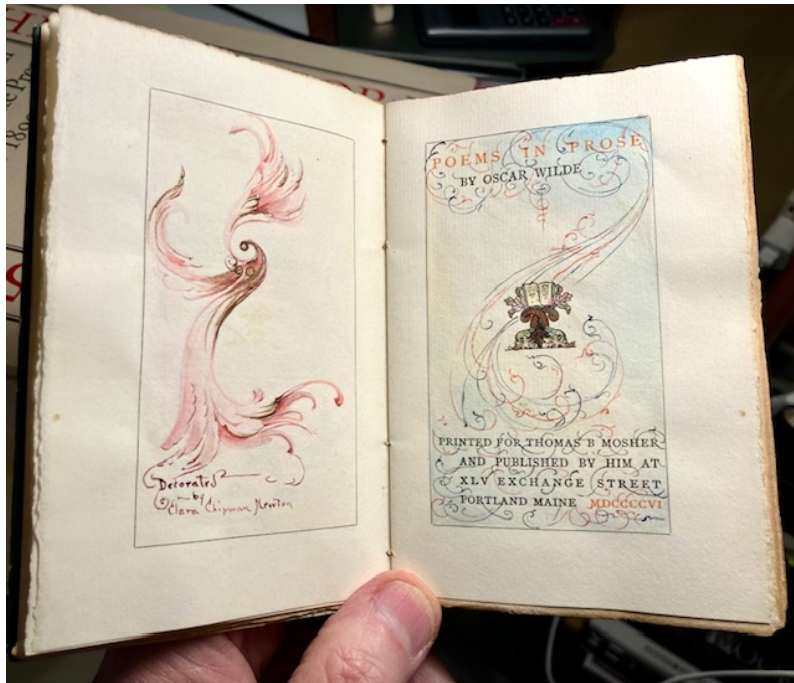


## CELEBRATED HAND-ILLUMINATION BY CLARA CHIPMAN NEWTON

8. Wilde, Oscar. *POEMS IN PROSE*. Portland, ME: Mosher, 1906. 5 5/8" x 3 3/4"; xvi, 54 pp. Hand-illuminated by Clara Chipman Newton with each page receiving her unique pastel watercolor designs, signed "Decorated by Clara Chipman Newton." In protective clamshell case by James Tapley, Sarasota, FL. All in fine condition. Bishop 298, p. 355 (R38), plate 29; *Color in American Fine & Private Press Books 1890-2015*. Penn Libraries-Kislak Center, 2016, pp. 32-34 (Fig. 29); *Thomas Bird Mosher and the Art of the Book* (1992), pp. 33-34, 97 (Fig. 45).

Clara Chipman Newton (1848-1936) spanned the Arts & Crafts movement in America as a central figure in the prominent Rookwood Pottery venture in Cincinnati, Ohio, which also included founding the Cincinnati Pottery Club. However, pottery decoration was only one of her many

gifted talents. Hand-illumination of books, particularly Mosher's productions, was another. In this copy of *Poems in Prose*, she displays her imaginative talent of painting swirls and interlinking

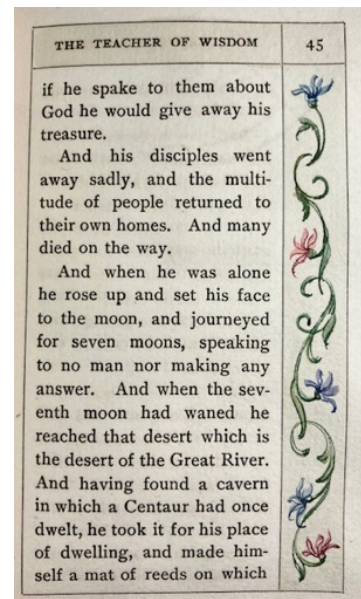


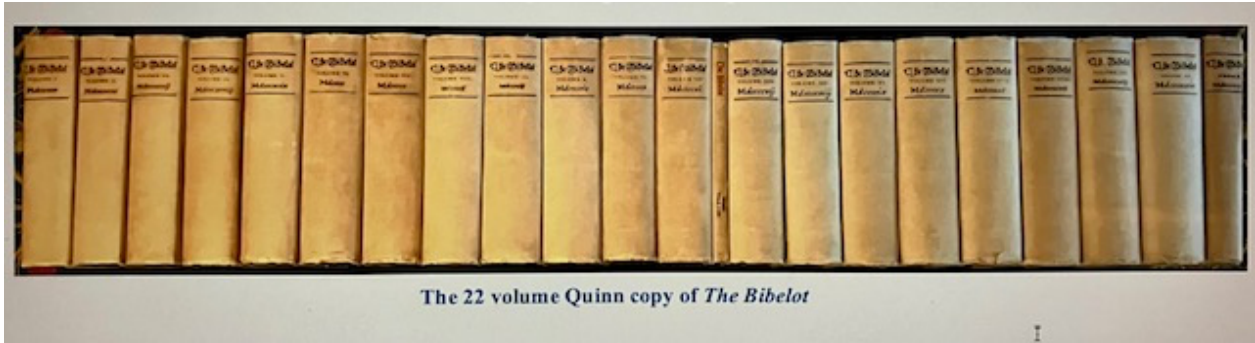
pastel watercolor designs to create a very pleasing effect.

This hand-illuminated copy was shown in two exhibitions, one at Temple University's 1992 "Thomas Bird Mosher and the Art of the Book" exhibition, and the other at the 2016 Kislak Center's "Color in American Fine & Private Press Books" at Penn Libraries in Philadelphia.

Regarding this book, there is a back story between two ardent Mosher collectors, Jean-François Vilain and Philip R. Bishop. Early in his Mosher collecting career, Bishop "mistakenly" sold the volume to Vilain. Always a focus of contentious regret, by

the time of the Penn show, the little volume was back in the possession of Bishop. A wall plaque of "Acknowledgements" at the exhibit included the statement: "Many thanks as well to Philip Bishop for his loan of a specially illustrated Mosher title he originally sold to Jean-François, and then bought back when he discovered he couldn't live without it." Hand-illuminated Mosher books form another sub-collection, further demonstrating their period placement within the Arts & Crafts movement, and this Newton piece is one of its stars.





### THE JOHN QUINN ULTRA-RARE COPY OF *THE BIBELOT*

9. Mosher, Thomas Bird, ed. *THE BIBELOT - A Reprint of Poetry and Prose for Book Lovers, chosen in part from scarce editions and sources not generally known*. (Portland, ME: Mosher, 1895-1915). 22 Volumes (including two indexes), complete with all advertisements. Different paginations; each volume 6 ¼" x 4 ¾"; inscribed/signed by Mosher. One of six sets, all printed on Japan vellum paper and in their original Japan vellum bindings. Famous New York literary attorney **John Quinn's copy**. Bookplates of John Quinn and Howard L. Spohn in each volume. VG-Fine condition. See Bishop 18-39; Quinn Library Sold by Auction (1924), Vol. I, lot 596.

---

This set is incredibly rare, and when one factors in the near-fine condition, it is said to be, in one word: *unobtainable*. Although there were but six possible sets. Marshalled evidence shows that only three sets could possibly exist today (see my detailed article "John Quinn's Copy of *The Bibelot*" posted on-line at the Mosher Press website), but only one set has the 1912 interim Index volume--the Bishop-Mosher Collection copy. Hands down, this is THE finest and only complete set in its original binding, with the further extraordinary provenance that it was John Quinn's copy.

The first owner was the immensely important and charming New York lawyer, John Quinn (1870-1924). From the lawyer side, he helped to protect and support Irish and British authors of the period, with his most outstanding achievement being his defense of James Joyce's *Ulysses* against the American censors. His outstanding collections of books and art were internationally recognized, and his integration into the fabric of Irish and British authors was highly notable. He not only became a recognized friend of the literary community, but his patronage helped numerous authors. Counted among his friends were members of the Yeats family, George Russell, George Moore, J. M. Synge, May Morris, Ezra Pound, and Joseph Conrad from whom he obtained many manuscripts and typescripts. More important for our purposes, **he was a long-time friend of Thomas B. Mosher, and this set stands as a major testimony to that important relationship.**

---

*"Few men have done more for literature, and done it so understandingly... he [Mosher] was a prolific and brilliant correspondent... [with a] splendid vitality of spirit."*

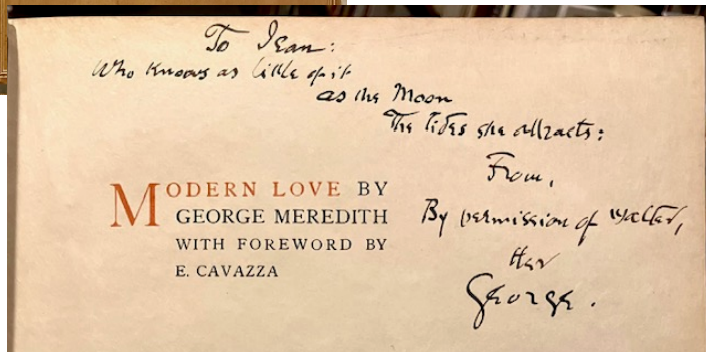
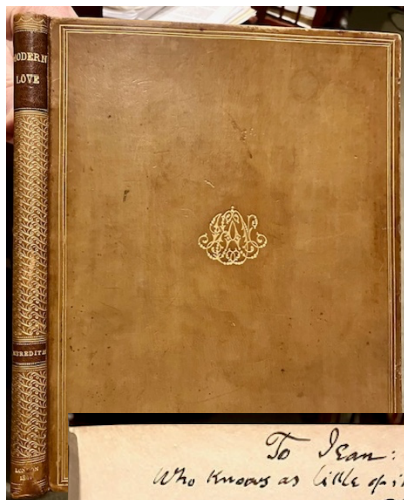
-- John Quinn

---

AUTHOR'S PRESENTATION COPY OF MOSHER'S FIRST BOOK

10. Meredith (George). *Modern Love*. Foreword by E. Cavazza. Portland, ME: Thomas Bird Mosher, 1891. 9 3/4" x 7 3/4"; 4 leaves, xvi, 50 unnumbered leaves, [1] p. Copy #3 of 10 Large Paper copies printed on Japan vellum paper; signed by the publisher. **Presentation Copy** inscribed and signed by the author on the title-page "*To Jean: | Who knows as little of it | as the Moon | The tides she attracts: | From, | By permission of Walter, | Her George.*" In a **Presentation Binding** blind-stamp and signed (top 2<sup>nd</sup> free flyleaf) by Cedric Chivers of Bath: contemporary smooth brown calf boards with triple fillet gilt, upper cover with central monogram "JEAN", spine elaborately gilt tooled with brown morocco labels. Inner dentelles and all page edges gilt; green moiré watered silk end-papers. Original bookplate of the presentee, Jean C. Palmer, and later bookplates of Simon Nowell-Smith and Judith Adams Nowell-Smith. Binding a little rubbed and slightly stained, otherwise VG-Fine condition. This is most likely THE copy that Mosher sent to George Meredith as recorded in Meredith's correspondence (see *Letters*, Cline, ed., nos. 1399 & 1405). Bishop 244; Buxton Forman 9.

In a copy of the London: Chapman & Hall, 1862 edition which Mosher gave to a favorite customer, Emilié Grigsby, a Meredith-to-Mosher letter dated March 24, 1892 was tucked in stating, in part: "*I have received the copy of Modern Love, & my previous letter has come to your hands, I may suppose. Your edition of the work is most creditable. In England the sumptuous edition is devoted only to very favourite writers. I cannot say it [is] generally an example of refinement. One has to look to France for an equal to your production...*"



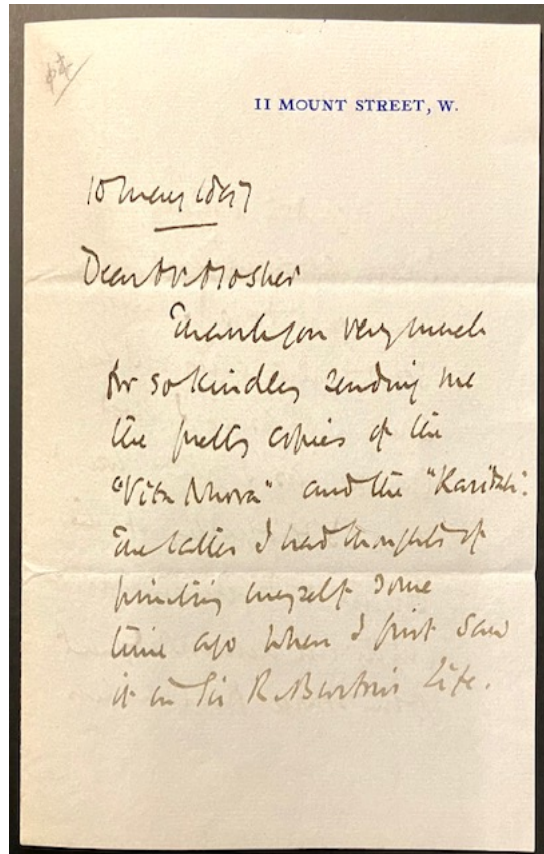
Jean Palmer was wife of Sir Walter Palmer (1858-1910), a wealthy biscuit manufacturer. The two loved to entertain artistic and literary celebrities at their town and country residences. Meredith was extremely fond of them. He referred to her as "Queen Jean" at her glittering receptions. The principal country estate for the Palmers was Frogmal, Sunninghill (about a mile east of Ascot, Berkshire County) and there they often entertained literary folks the likes of Oscar Wilde, John Ruskin, and of course, George Meredith. His beloved "Queen Jean" was the object of Meredith's chivalric love in his later life, although his general gallantry toward women was well known. They probably

met sometime around 1890 and maintained a close correspondence, visitations, and mutual gift giving. Meredith was apparently very pleased to give Queen Jean this copy of his *Modern Love* published by Mosher.

No further rationale is needed for the significance of this book in the Bishop-Mosher Collection.

## REVEALING LETTER FROM THE ASHENDENE PRESS

11. (press association MS) Autograph Letter Signed from C. H. St. John Hornby to Thomas Bird Mosher dated 10 May 1897. 3 pages on 1896 watermarked paper, folded three times. When unfolded, measures about 10" x 8", but when horizontal and folded in center creating four pages, the letter measures 8" x 5" with Hornby's pre-printed "11 Mount Street, W." in blue (upper right corner). Entirely in Hornby's hand, the letter reads: "10 May 1897 | Dear Mr. Mosher | Thank you very much | for so kindly sending me | the pretty copies of the | "Vita Nuova" and the "Kasidah". | The latter I had thoughts | of printing myself some | time ago when I first saw | it in Sir R Burton's Life. || With regard to 'Omar', if | I can at any time | manage to do so I will | send you a copy. I feel | somewhat as if I owed | you one, as I made use of | your Bibliography of the | British & American Editions- | with an acknowledgement | of the source from which || it was derived-) | I had a visit a few | days ago from a brother | amateur printer from | New York - Dr. E. Hopkins, | who has lately set up a | Press, and like myself | does all his work with his | own hands. | Ever truly | C. H. St.JHornby." Fine condition.



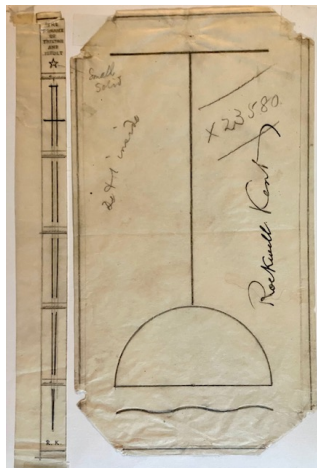
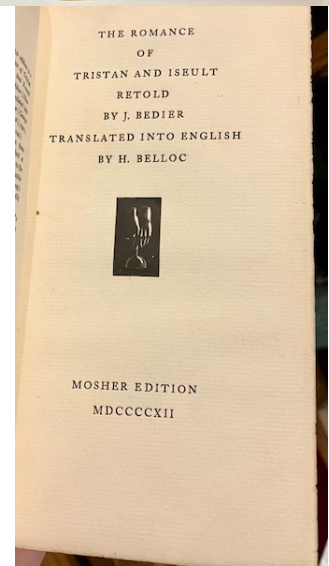
Another Hornby ALS in the Mosher Collection is dated 2 April 1897 in which Hornby thanks Mosher for sending "*your very dainty edition of Omar*" and indicates "*there has been such a run on my Edition [of Omar] of which I only printed 50 copies...*" so he doesn't have a copy to send to Mosher. but says he will send Mosher a copy of "Three Poems of John Milton" which he printed the year before. Hornby also asks Mosher to send a copy of Burton's "Kasidah" or "The New Life" of Dante which Hornby indicates he printed in the original Italian two years ago. He further explains, "*I do all my work, setting up type & printing, myself with the help of my sisters,...*" concluding "*I enclose a short description of my Edition of Omar for your next Bibliography.*"

It was Samuel P. Avery, then president of The Grolier Club, who first sent Mosher's edition of the *Rubaiyat* to Hornby referring to it as, "a neat edition of the same [*Rubaiyat*] done up in New England--a copy of which I sent you & which I trust you received."\* Franklin records, "At the end [of the Ashendene *Rubaiyat*], reprinted from Thomas Mosher's edition of 1895 (courteously sent across, as we have seen, by Samuel Avery) is the descriptive bibliography of Fitzgerald's poem in its English and American appearances."

\* Avery to Hornby 15 Aug. 1896 letter in Colin Franklin's *The Ashendene Press* (Dallas: Bridwell Library, 1986, pp. 14 & 16).

ROCKWELL KENT'S UNIQUE ADAPTATION OF MOSHER'S *TRISTAN*  
LEADING TO A BIG DISCOVERY

12. (small archive) Belloc, Hillaire, trans. ***THE ROMANCE OF TRISTAN AND ISEULT***. Retold by J. Bédier. Portland, ME: Thomas B. Mosher, 1922. ii, 134, [1] pp.; 7 1/8" x 4", a.e.g. Title-page redesigned by Rockwell Kent, and rebound in full niger morocco for Kent with his new cover design at the Donnelley Bindery in Chicago for his wife; new title page substituted in place of Mosher's original t.p., presenting a Kent woodcut illustration of hands holding an upside down wine goblet and giving the imprint as "MOSHER EDITION / MDCCCCXII" (error in Roman numerals). Altogether this archive consists of (1) the Donnelley binding with new title page, (2) Kent's original drawings for the covers and original spine design, (3) Mosher's original Japan vellum binding boards with bookplate of Kent's wife (Francis Lee) and hand-written instructions by William A. Kittredge of the Lakeside Press for the Donnelley Bindery and print shop, (4) the loose bookplate of Jacquie & Dan Burne Jones who first wrote about the existence of this Kent binding, (5) a copy of the *Rockwell Kent Review*, Vol XLVI / 2020-2021 issue from the Plattsburgh State Art Museum at SUNY, and (6) the business card of Scott Ferris through whom the Kent drawings and ephemera pertaining to this book were purchased. Near Fine condition.



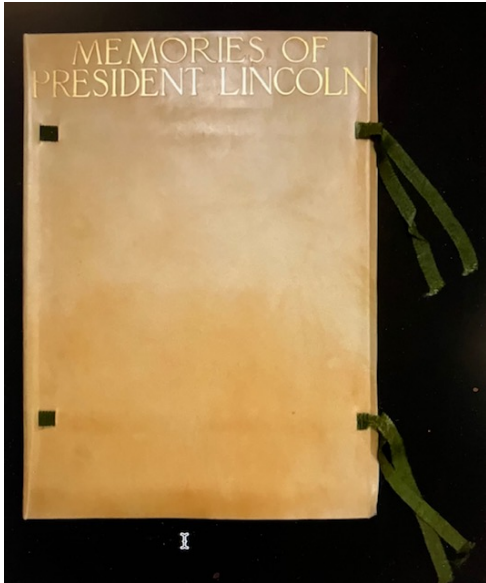
The painstakingly researched and beautifully illustrated article in the 2020/2021 *Rockwell Kent Review*, entitled "Rockwell Kent's Unique 'Tristan and Iseult' ", (pp. 11-14), not only reveals the details behind the creation of this unique *Tristan* volume, but as the editor of the *Rockwell Kent Review* notes, "...Kent designed the special binding for his wife's personal copy of *Tristan and Iseult*, a simple graphic that would be repurposed to greater glory and mystery, as resolved here by Phil Bishop."—p. [1]. The mystery and greater glory? The article shows how by means of this Mosher volume, Kent first created what would eventually become the cover design on each of the three volumes of the celebrated Lakeside Press edition of *Moby-Dick*

(1930) which was fully illustrated by Rockwell Kent. All this is revealed in the article (readers here are encouraged to look it up) and beautifully illustrates the *raison-d'être* of the Bishop-Mosher Collection: to open up research opportunities through the use of the collection, and to firmly establish Mosher's "private press" role in the publishing world of *belles-lettres*. Bishop's article is easily found on the Mosher Press website at [www.thomasbirdmosher.net](http://www.thomasbirdmosher.net).



VERY RARE VELLUM PRINTING & GREAT ASSOCIATION COPY

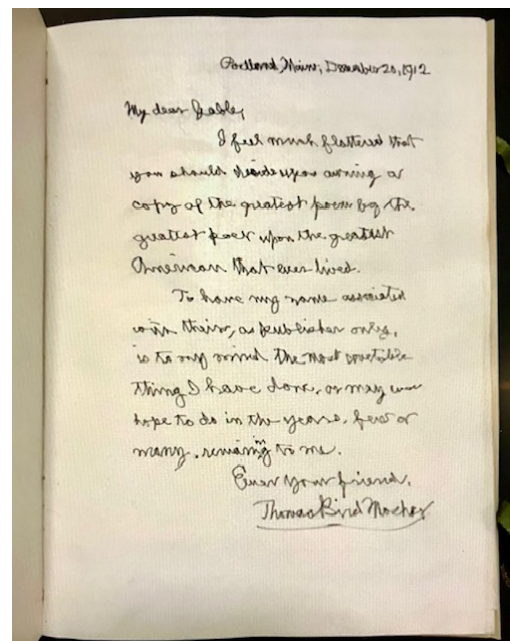
13. (inscribed) Whitman, Walt. *MEMORIES OF PRESIDENT LINCOLN*. Portland, ME: Thomas B. Mosher, 1912. 2 leaves, [i-ix], x-xii, [1-2] unnumbered leaves, 3-13 numbered leaves printed on recto side only, [14-15] leaves (but verso of [15] is numbered 16), [1 p., (colophon)]



frontispiece; 11 7/8" x 8 1/2". Copy #3 of only 10 on vellum. Printed on Roman vellum and bound in flexible Classic vellum with yapp fore-edges and ties. Printed dust jacket and original slipcase. Inscribed on a front vellum endpaper in a rather shaky hand: "Portland, Maine; December 20, 1912 | My dear Gable, | I feel much flattered that | you should decide upon owning a | copy of the greatest poem by the | greatest poet upon the greatest | American [Lincoln] that ever lived. | To have my name associated | with theirs, as publisher only, | is to my mind the most covetable | thing I have done, or may ever | hope to do in the years, few or | many, remaining to me. | Ever your friend, | Thomas Bird Mosher". On the outside of the green printed slipcase, Gable has written: "Memories of President | Lincoln, | Walt Whitman | No. 3 of 10 copies only | on Classic vellum. | Signed by the Publisher | and specially autographed | by Thomas Bird Mosher | for

William F. Gable. [flourish]". Fine condition.

As one might expect, Mosher kept especially close ties with important collectors, and William F. Gable (1856-1921) was certainly one of them. Gable was an outstanding book and manuscript collector who, as owner of the Gable Department Store in Altoona, PA, commanded the monetary resources to buy exquisite material in many different fields including presidential manuscripts, Americana, E.A. Poe, Walt Whitman among other authors, and fine bindings. He was also a friend of different Arts & Crafts communities. His interest in Mosher would eventually lead to his co-publishing the first facsimile of the 1855 Whitman *Leaves of Grass* which Mosher brought out in 1919 (2<sup>nd</sup> edition in 1920) and he got co-billing with Mosher on that publication's title page. He even supplied Mosher with his own copy of the original first edition to help make the facsimile. So, in this copy of *Memories of President Lincoln* (1912) we see Mosher cultivating this deep-pocketed customer with his own rare vellum imprint.



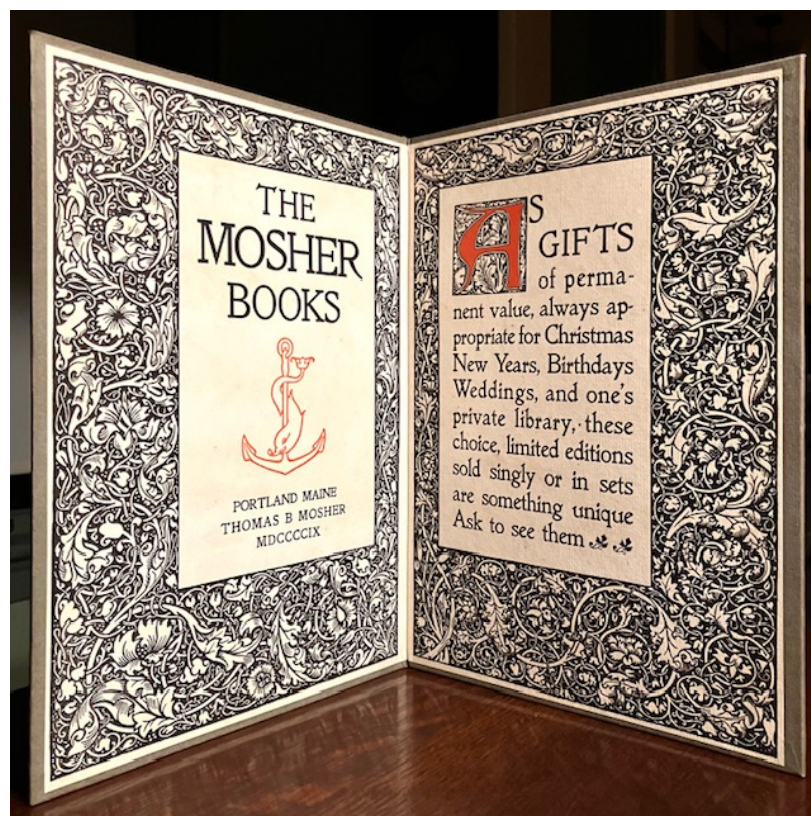
Mosher's handwriting in the lengthy inscription a bit concerning though. Even that he should have attempted such a long inscription causes one to pause. During the winter of 1909/1910

Mosher suffered a debilitating attack of neuritis which rendered his right arms lame, and he had to learn to write all over again with his left hand which explains the shakiness of his cursive writing.

---

#### ADVERTISING DIPTYCH

14. (ephemera) **Countertop Advertising Diptych.** (Portland, ME: The Mosher Books, 1909). 11 ¼" x 8" when folded; 16" x 11 ¼" when fully opened. Morrisian borders surround each advertisement inset, with the left panel portraying the typical layout found in Mosher's catalogues, while the right inset is headed by a dominating red Morris initial guiding the eye to suggest occasions for giving Mosher books to guests or family, or for one's own private library. Designed for countertop display at one of the bookseller shops selling or taking orders for The Mosher Books. Stores were also supplied The Mosher Books catalogue with the store name printed on the front cover. Exceedingly rare. Very Fine condition.



---

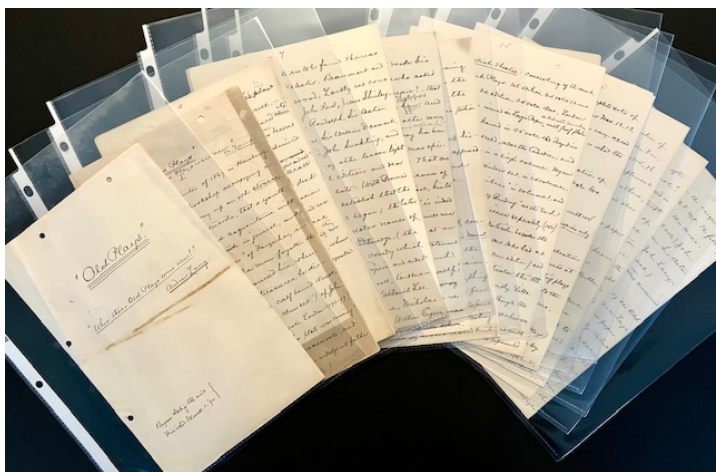
When a customer entered Paul Elder Co's emporium in San Francisco, Mosher books would be on display in showcases. Atop the showcase such an advertising diptych would attract the potential customer to inquire. Brentano's, Bergdorf-Goodman, Kauffmans, Fowler Brothers, Marshall Field & Co. were others. The Bishop-Mosher Collection houses hundreds of pieces of ephemera, but this advertising diptych is one of the largest and boldest. There are book prospectuses, single page flyers, advertising bookmarks, folded "quick order" sheets, catalogues, stationary, billing sheets, thin booklets overviewing *The Bibelot*, unfolded book covers, mini-catalogues, and the list goes on and on. One could take a picture of a whole mass of such items,

but it was decided to represent them all with this one incredible advertising diptych if only because they were usually destroyed after use. In nearly 40 years of spelunking bookfairs and bookstores, inspecting institutional collections, and visiting private collections, I have only seen two: one totally unfit for collecting, and the other this one which was kept in the files of an early NY advertising artist, John Silva. It was brought to a book show by a Long Island bookseller who kept it under her skirted table until I arrived. Without a word she placed it in my hands, and I said “sold” without inquiring how much she was asking for it. She knew it’s ephemeral rarity as well as I, and for the rest of the show and even to this day, it brings a smile to my face.

---

#### A “SECRET” TREASURE TROVE OF EARLY PRIMARY MATERIAL

### 15. (manuscript) Mosher, Thomas Bird. “**Old Plays**”--“*When these Old Plays were new!*”-



*Andrew Lang*. Unpublished holograph manuscript written entirely in Mosher’s hand. Finished March 1, 1891, 50 pp. 9 ½” x 6” The *ms* book covers plays from the 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries and marshals overviews, assessments, bibliographic information, early schooling documents, etc. This is just one of many original, unpublished works which range from essays, short books, and poems. There are over three hundred pages entirely in Mosher’s hand (with the exception of a few typed), many being written prior to

his initial steps into the publishing world in 1891, and many autobiographical in nature. Additionally, there are a few pages and drafts written for The Mosher Books publications. Fine.

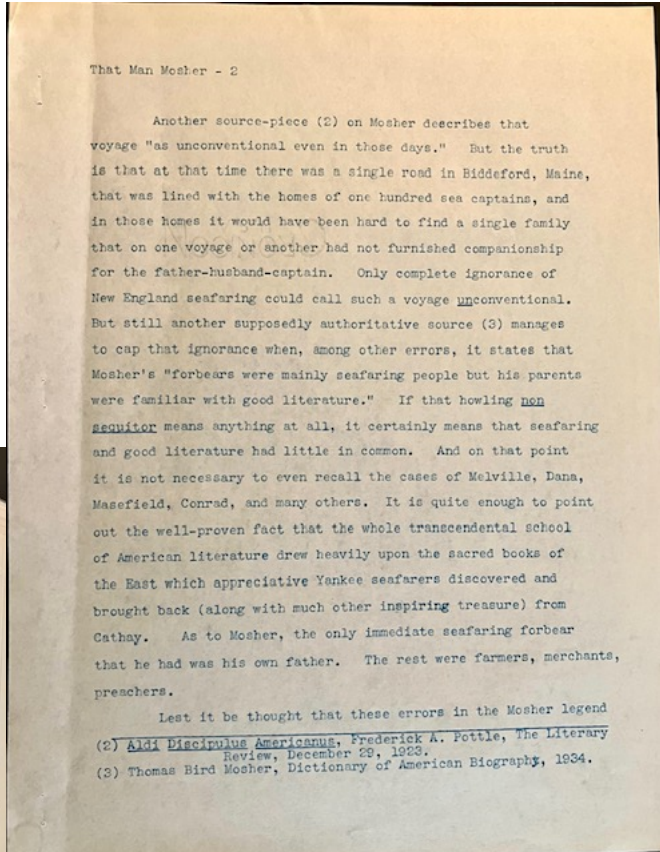
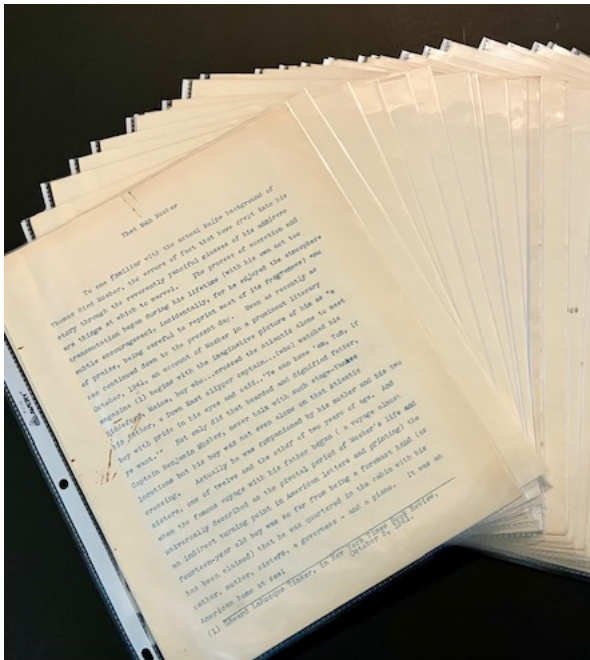
---

This extraordinary cache of literary and biographical-related material was part of the locked, “secret” drawer of material which Mosher instructed his office assistant to remove upon his death so the second Mrs. Mosher did not get ahold of it. The only part of those holdings that did get destroyed was his life-long communication with his first wife, Ellie Dresser (later Aimee Lenalie who did a fair amount of French translation for some of Mosher’s books). There are also photographs, programs, and other accounts related to his early years which were stored in this drawer. These all are now in the Bishop-Mosher Collection. In addition to these particular manuscripts are pages upon pages of original ship documents kept by Mosher’s father, Captain Benjamin Mosher, for the ships he commanded including the DeWitt Clinton, the Bark Warden, the Norway, the Henry Pratt, one of the most important, the clipper ship Nor’wester, on which Captain Mosher took along his family on a set of voyages around the world from Feb. 22, 1867-March 10, 1870. These primary materials are critically important to elucidating Mosher’s upbringing and it’s influences on his embarkation into the world of publishing.



## EARLY LIFE OF THOMAS BIRD MOSHER RESEARCHED

16. (archive) Yorke, Dane. Unpublished typescript of "That Man Mosher" 58 pages. ca. 1942. 8 1/2" x 11", single sided. The archive includes Yorke's research notes, index cards, documents, pictures, and hundreds of letters between the Biddeford, Maine historian and Flora Macdonald Lamb, Mosher's erstwhile office manager and later director of publications and operations under "The Mosher Press" imprint from 1923-1941. VG-Fine condition.



Amateur writer and historian, Dane Yorke (1889-1970), wrote histories of various businesses in New England, e.g., *Able Men of Boston* (1950) about the

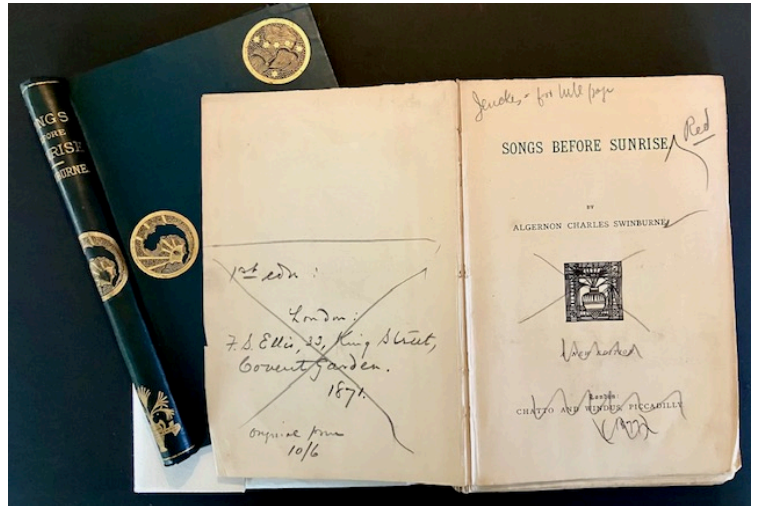
Boston Manufacturers Mutual Fire Insurance Company, and the *Men and Times of Pepperell* (1944). He also did some writing for H. L. Mencken's *The American Mercury* and completed a short novel, *As Much as Twice* (1935). He wrote a history and stories about Mosher's hometown, Biddeford, but never completed this life of Mosher's years leading up to his publishing business. He served as librarian at the MacArthur Public Library in Biddeford for 30 years.

*His ability to combine the two enthusiasms [love of literature and of fine printing] in a long series of titles published at modest prices is what makes him an enduring figure in the history of American Bookmaking... Mosher had disseminated his books wider than any private press, while investing in them a degree of personal conviction no trade publisher could possibly emulate.*

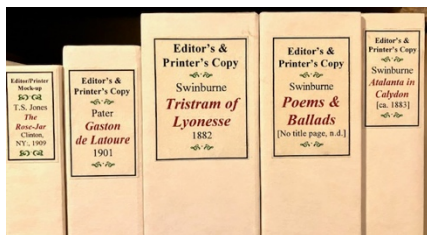
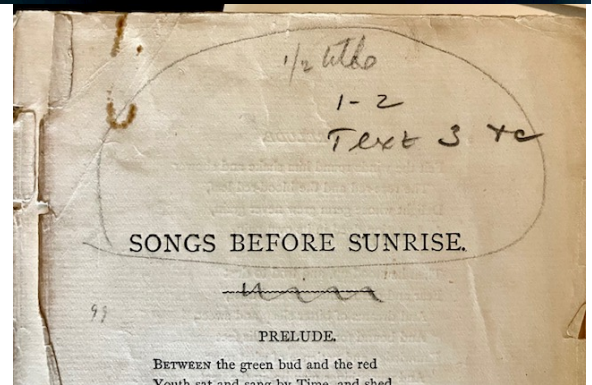
--Susan Otis Thompson in Kaplan's *The Art that is Life* (1987)

EDITOR'S & PRINTER'S COPY

17. (original source text) Swinburne, Algernon Charles. **SONGS BEFORE SUNRISE**. London: Chatto & Windus, [no date, ca. 1877]. viii, 287, [1].; 7 5/8" x 5 3/8" Disbound and disassembled, with editor and printer markings and instructions on various pages throughout. Used by Thomas Bird Mosher to prepare his own edition of *Songs Before Sunrise* (Mosher, 1901). A unique copy of this highly unusual survival, usually relegated to the trash bin. Bishop 364 for further discussion. G-VG.



The Bishop-Mosher Collection contains at least 40 of these volumes Mosher took apart and marked for his printer to set type. He certainly must have gone over these volumes in fine detail to start the process of making his own presentation of the book. Twenty of these volumes, in the most fragile condition, have been individually wrapped in a paper chemise and placed into a labeled white paper-over-boards slipcase. Other volumes are not quite as wrecked, but still carry Mosher's notes and indicators as to which text is to be reprinted. I acquired these twenty volumes from Francis O'Brien's Hiram Farm estate in Maine.



He offered me of the lot which he gathered when in 1948 the auction house came to pack up Mosher's books for auction. He forewarned me that three of the books had been chewed by chipmunks whilst stored. They were really not in that bad a condition, but the whole group has henceforth been called "The Chipmunk Lot" out of courtesy to the chipmunks who held back from totally destroying the books for nesting fodder.

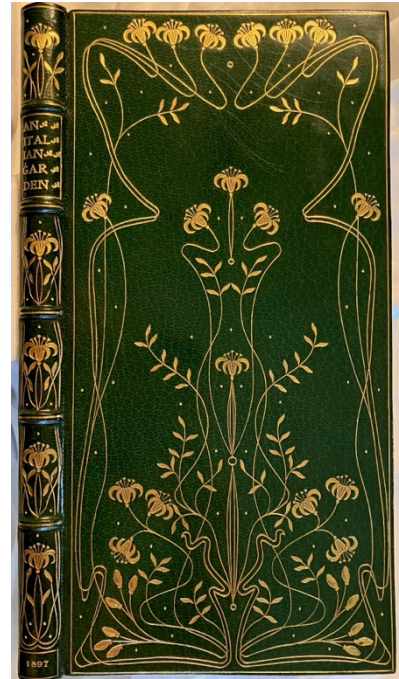
Incidentally, the gold roundels designed by Dante Gabrielle Rossetti on the 1877 binding's cover were also used on the front cover of Mosher's 1901 edition.

*The Mosher editions, and the Riverside Press special editions designed by Bruce Rogers, are the two highspots of American printing and publishing. Other presses may have issued more pretentious work, much more elaborately decorated books, or even in some cases more beautiful single volumes. But these two series of publications are the most distinguished--by their simplicity, sincerity, beauty, wise selection of content, readability, appropriateness of the form to the substance, and uniformity fine design.*

--Curtis Hidden Page, English professor at Dartmouth, ca 1930's

Exhibited at the Minneapolis Arts & Crafts Exhibition, 1903  
Part of Grand Prize at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition of 1904  
Pictured in Otto Zahn's book, *On Art Binding*

18. Robinson, A. Mary F. *An Italian Garden—A Book of Songs* (Portland, ME: Mosher, 1897. 95, [1] pp. (numbered using Roman numerals). One of 925 printed on Dutch Van Gelder paper as the tenth and last book issued in "The Bibelot Series." Binding measures about 4 1/4" x 8 1/4." Bound in full mirror polished green levant morocco using the same elaborate Art Nouveau design on both gilt--framed covers. Overall design is comprised of curvilinear tooling of stems, leaves, and flowers set up symmetrically. Spine in six panels with five raised bands. Gilt nouveau design of stems, flowers and dots reaches upward from the bottom and culminates in the same lily flower found in all the other panels; top edge gilt. Elaborate half inch wide turn-ins gilt tooled in complementary design with wavy lines within gilt-framed edges. Inner pastedowns of green, blue and brown floriated paper matching adjoining endpapers. Binding is signed TOOF & CO at bottom of front turn-in, and is by Otto Zahn. Housed in specially designed quarter morocco clamshell case by James Tapley, along with copy #92 of Zahn's signed monograph *On Art Binding* (Memphis, TN: S/ C. Toof & Company, 1904) inscribed by Zahn to binding exhibition promoter, "To Miss Esther Griffin White by the author. Memphis, 1905." Very fine condition. Bishop 178.



This celebrated prize-winning binding (pictured above) is one of the most remarkable Art Nouveau bindings ever produced in America. It is pictured in Otto Zahn's now classic monograph, *On Art Binding*, along with another picture of a Mosher book in spectacular Zahn binding, *Marius the Epicurean* (two vols. bound in one, 1900). The beautifully bound *Marius* is also in the Bishop-Mosher Collection!!! Taking things one step further, the original binding used as the monograph's color-frontispiece is additionally included in the Bishop-Mosher Collection as part of a spectacular "archive" of Otto Zahn and Lorenze Schwartz (worked under Zahn) bindings in the collection. A total of 20

Toof/Zahn/Schwartz bindings are accompanied by four volumes of notes on Zahn's work, two vols of which are filled with the *original* correspondence from the Toof Company and their promotion of bindings in their possession long after the famed bindery discontinued its services. The Bishop-Mosher binding (pictured to the left) is by L. Schwartz on Copy No. 1 of 75 printed on Japan vellum paper and signed by Zahn. Relevancy: all collecting categories: bindings on Mosher books, references, archives, associations and *mss* correspondence, and Mosher books.

RARE RUBÁIYÁT INSCRIBED BY MISS EMILIE GRIGSBY

19. (association, vellum) *RUBÁIYÁT OF OMAR KHAYYÁM*. Portland, ME: Privately Printed, 1899. 4 preliminary leaves, [32], [1] pp; 9 1/8" 7 6/8". Bound Kelmscott-style in limp vellum with ties, title gilt on spine, in brocade slipcase with black printed title on spine. **Copy # 6 of 10 printed on pure vellum.** Bookplate of the NY based publisher and theatrical impresario: "From the Books of Crosby Gaige." Boldly inscribed by the co-publisher, Emilie Grigsby: "To John Law | in Friendship | Emilie Grigsby | May 23rd 1901--" Front colophon reads: "This Book, of which 10 copies and no more are | done on pure vellum, was privately printed by | THOMAS B. MOSHER and EMILIE B. GRIGSBY | at Portland, Maine, in the month of May, | M•D•CCC•XCIX, and the type distributed. | This is Number 6." Back Colophon (in all caps): "Here ends the Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám of Naishápúr rendered into English Verse by Edward FitzGerald, being the text of his Fourth Edition (1879), including the minor variants of the Fifth and Final Edition (1889). Done into type, and ten copies and no more printed on pure vellum by Thomas B. Mosher & Emilié B. Grigsby, at Portland, Maine, during the month of May, A.D. M•D•CCC•XCIX [1899]" Near Fine cond. Bishop 337.

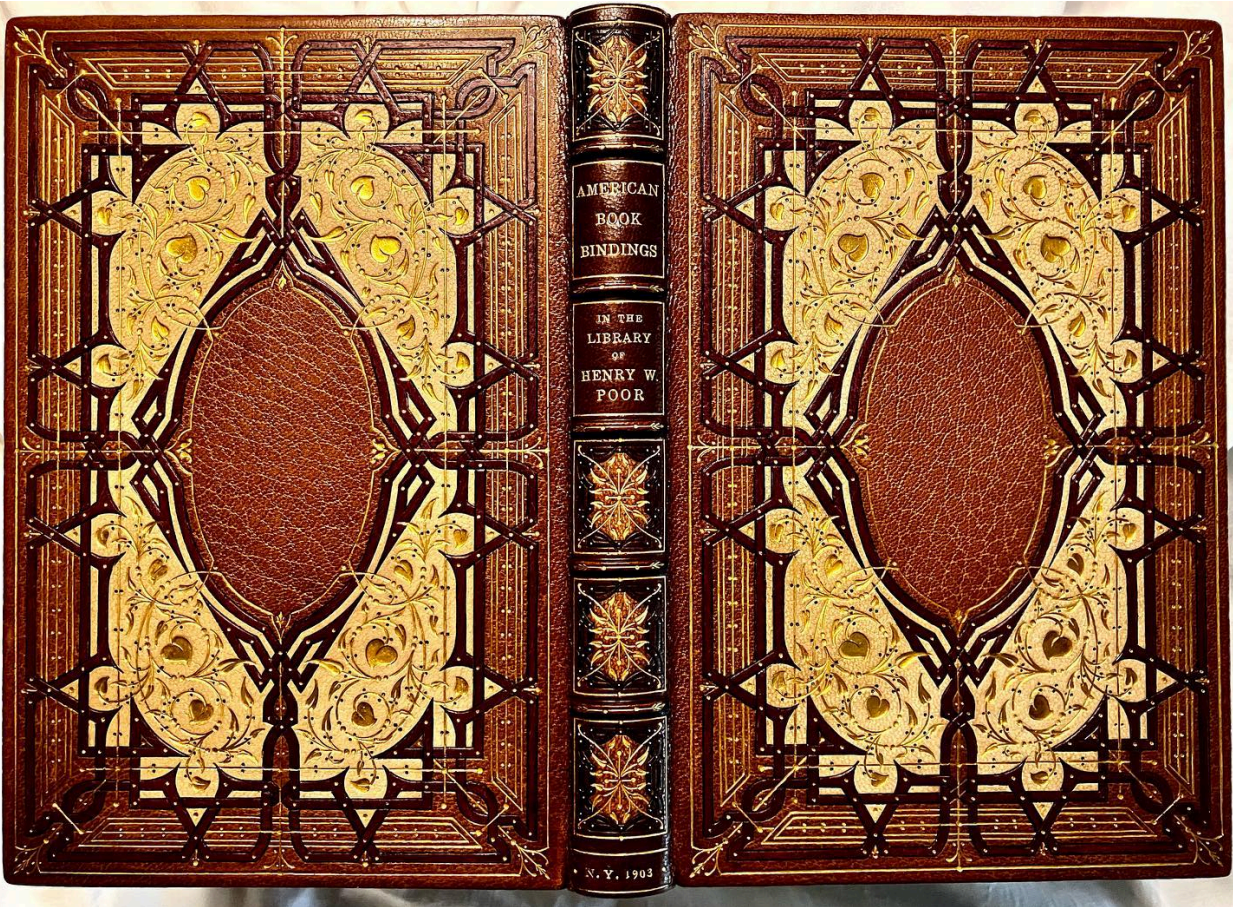


Emilie Busbey Grigsby (1879-1964), heiress to the Charles T. Yerkes fortune of Chicago, was one of Mosher's most important wealthy customers living in New York City. Mosher counseled her on book acquisitions, and selected signed and association copies of the Mosher books (and those of other publishers) helping to build her library. Together they "published" this *Rubaiyat* over which Mosher and Grigsby split their ownership of copies 50/50. Her library was sold in 1912 when she moved permanently to England, although she took along several selective books, one of which is in the Collection, as is a specially bound copy of her two 1912 auction catalogues.



This copy was presented by Grigsby to John Law, the pen name for Margaret Harkness, the English radical journalist and writer living in London. Grigsby most certainly met her in London as she was there at the time of this inscription. Margaret and Emilie were both fiercely independent women, and Grigsby took it upon herself to become a rather famed American hostess in England. There is probably a fascinating story behind the Grigsby / Harkness relationship which remains unresearched.

The Bishop-Mosher Collection contains a number of books from Grigsby's library with her Lalique bookplate. There is also a 7-page letter of Dec. 28, 1897 from Mosher to Grigsby detailing what services Mosher could offer, thus initiating their bookseller/collector relationship. An early portrait (6.5" diameter) by Jan van Beers, painted in oils on wood, is also in the Bishop-Mosher Collection and appears to the left.



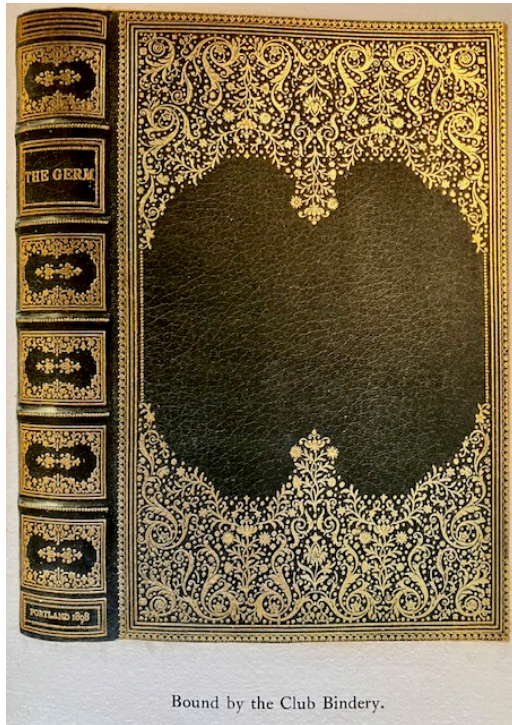
“THE MOST BEAUTIFUL BOOK OF ITS KIND”

20. Pène du Bois, Henri. *AMERICAN BOOKBINDINGS IN THE LIBRARY OF HENRY WILLIAM POOR*. Jamaica, New York: George D. Smith (printed at The Marion Press), 1903. [xvi], 72, [6] pp.; 9 ¼" x 6 ½" Only edition. Copy #160 of 200 copies on hand-made paper; this copy signed by Henry William Poor. A striking and magnificent *mosaic* morocco binding heavily onlaid and gilt-stamped by Alfred William Launder, Bradstreet's finest binder, who bound for major collectors such as William Loring Andrews, Robert Hoe, Henry William Poor, and J. Pierpont Morgan in the early 1900's. Richly adorned with multiple large sections of onlaid morocco including a central beige pattern and intricate maroon strap work. Gilt stamped and tooled fillet borders and winding vines terminating in prominent solid hearts on the beige morocco. Single gilt fillet ruling along all board edges. Spine with five raised bands, six compartments decorated to match the cover designs. Wide dentelles with six fillet concentric rectilinear edge motifs of different composition, signed on front dentelle in gilt pallet, "Bradstreet's." Marbled pastedowns and end-sheets. Top edges gilt. Original cloth covers bound-in at end. Fine. The imprint was called "the most beautiful book of its kind ever issued in America" in 1908 by the Anderson Auction Company. A detailed article appears on the Mosher Press website: [www.thomasbirdmosher.net](http://www.thomasbirdmosher.net)

---



This is a title I brought into the Bishop-Mosher Collection for four reasons: **(1)** It's a book devoted to Henry William Poor's bindings collection which included many on Mosher Press books, **(2)** H. W. Poor, like Mosher, was born in Maine, **(3)** As a reference, it's been of particular interest in that a vellum copy of Mosher's *The Germ* (1898) is pictured in a Club binding opposite p. 40, and I own Mosher's vellum copy later bound by Mounteney, and lastly, **(4)** It has been singled out as one of the finest color printed books on book bindings of the period. So, when this copy in such a glorious mosaic binding came along, I snatched it up. It has to be the most expensive book I've ever purchased for the reference section of the Bishop-Mosher Collection, but certainly some allowance has to be made for an extravagant purchase or two. Another copy of the same title is in the collection, inscribed to the ill-fated Titanic victim:



Bound by the Club Bindery.

*“To Frank D. Millet | with the warm regards of | Henry W. Poor | New York | Dec 2, 1904.”*

The collection's reference section is around 300 strong with titles on Mosher, about Mosher, containing references to Mosher or to The Mosher Books, exhibition catalogues, sales catalogues, my writings on Mosher including the bio-bibliography *Thomas Bird Mosher--Pirate Prince of Publishers* (Oak Knoll Press & the British Library, 1998) and periodicals to which I've contributed articles or assisted scholars in their research.

---

*“I remember someone saying to me once that only wicked people can produce beautiful books and I am thinking that you must be dreadfully wicked, for it is to [my] mind an ideal production of its kind.” --Stuart Mason (Christopher Millard) on Mosher's edition of *The Poetical Works of Oscar Wilde* (1908) in his 12/19/08 letter to Mosher at the Houghton.*

---

Here ends **Part One** of the  
 “Bibliography of Representative Items”  
 Be sure to check for **Part Two**  
 of 20 more highlights  
 to be posted later

❧❧❧ ❧❧❧

❧❧ ❧❧

❧ ❧

P. R. B. - T. B. M.  
 Collection