

# Found a little here, and a little there...

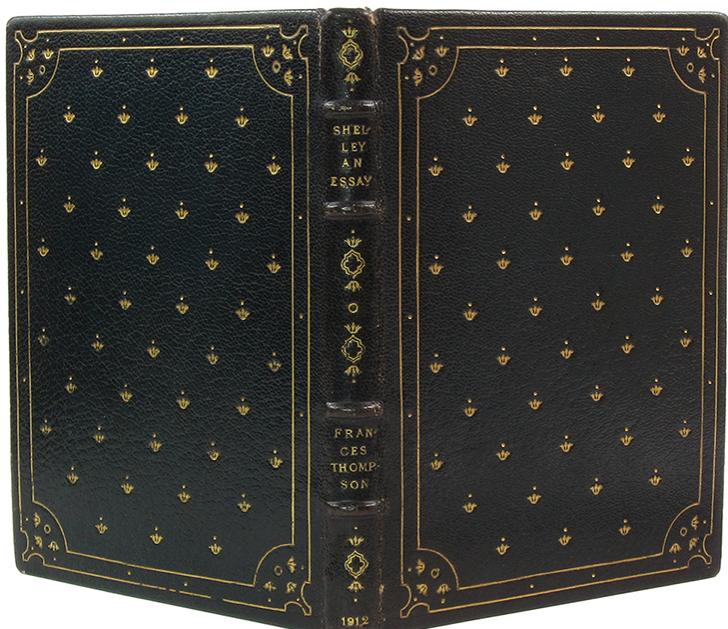
The following items have been added to the Mosher Collection since the last issue of *Endpapers*. Nothing stellar, but still a nice set of additional material upgrading or augmenting the collection.

(1) When it comes to Japan vellum copies of **The Mosher Books** in the collection, most of the titles Mosher published are represented in their more limited Japan vellum states. It has taken decades to assemble the Japan vellum copies throughout the collection, so you can imagine my surprise when I came across a grouping of Japan vellum Mosher books at San Francisco's PBA Galleries including fifteen that I didn't have. Here in one fell swoop were copies I had never seen except perhaps in institutional collections. The opportunity presented itself and I walked away with 38 Japan vellum Mosher books in near to fine condition which is just the way I like 'em. Both my bids were winners! I had the delightful task of checking each of these against either copies already in the collection to see if the newly acquired copy upgraded one that I already had, or to fill a hole where the Japan vellum copy was missing. From that pool the following twelve titles were added to the collection, with the remainder for resale:

- William Aspenwall Bradley's *Garland and Wayfarings* (1917)—added this upgrade copy
- Gordon Bottomley's *A Vision of Giorgione* (1910)—had inscribed copy, but needed it unsigned
- *Primavera: Poems by Four Authors* (1900)—enjoyed adding this copy #1
- *Our Lady's Tumbler* (1900)—appreciated adding this copy #1
- John Keats's *Odes, Sonnets & Lyrics* (1922)—added and moved an association copy to another area
- Ernest Dowson's *Studies in Sentiment* (1915)—missing, so added to the collection
- George Gissing's *By the Ionian Sea* (1920)—missing, so added it to the collection
- George Gissing's *Books and the Quiet Life* (1914)—missing, so added to the collection
- George Gissing's *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft* (1914)—loved adding this copy #1
- Thomas Jones's *The Rose-Jar* (1915)—missing, so added to the collection
- Edith M. Thomas's *The Flower from the Ashes* (1915)—upgraded this pristine one for a worn copy
- Lizette Woodworth Reese's *A Quiet Road* (1916)—missing, so added to the collection

This opportunity to acquire such a large number of Japan vellum printings for what turned out to be a very reasonable price for the two lots, well.... it just doesn't happen often, especially for those volumes whose limitation was only 25 copies printed on Japan vellum. Windfall is the term that comes to mind, and a simple phrase captures my feeling: "Like a kid in a candy shop."

(2) Added a signed binding: Francis Thompson's *Shelley: An Essay* (Mosher, 1912). Bound in full contemporary morocco; overall tooling in gilt on covers and spine, and raised bands. Signed by the binder: 19•M•E•T•17 in gilt inside rear board. →



(3) Acquired a copy of Francesca Alexander's *The Story of Ida: Epitaph on an Etrurian Tomb* (Mosher, 1899) in very unusual and relatively modern decorated paper boards.

(4) John Addington Symonds's ***FRAGILIA LABILIA***. Portland, ME: Mosher, 1902. One of 450 printed on Kelmscott "Hammer & Anvil" handmade paper. Simply bound in 3/4 brown morocco over tan cloth with title and date in gilt on rounded spine; marbled endpapers; original printed book wrapper bound in. This copy bears the ownership signature of "J. V. A. MacMurray / I - 16 - '03" (January 16, 1903). The owner was J. V. A. MacMurray (1881-1960), full name: John Van Antwerp MacMurray. Graduated from Princeton in 1902; listed as Diplomat and Photographer in China, 1913-1929; American minister to China, 1925-29; wrote "Problems of Foreign Capital in China" in *Foreign Affairs*, April 1925. pp. 411-422; editor/compiler of *Treaties and Agreements with and concerning China 1894-1919*. NY: Oxford University Press, 1921. (photo from National Photo Co. Collection / Library of Congress)

Nothing to necessarily write home about, but it's a book of admirable design and the provenance is interesting and binding sound. It came from a private source, an interesting character himself, who I like to keep happy if only because he comes up with some unusual things from time to time.

(5) A copy of Mosher's 1926 catalogue, inscribed on the front cover by John L. Foley to Dean Bouton. Foley wrote the introduction to the catalogue in which the second *Amphora* "Memorial Edition" is praised. The recipient, Archibald Lewis Boulton (1872-1941), did some writing and editing, but he was best known as a professor and an administrative type. He was an English professor for 43 years and Dean at NYU for 21 years. Foley sent this to him while Boulton was acting Dean of the Graduate School (1925-27). As a graduate of Columbia, he probably came into Foley's orbit through Foley's very close friend, Thomas S. Jones, Jr. (1882-1932) who had connections to Columbia, although there may have been other connections since all were involved in one way or another with New York City universities.

(6) A copy of the little magazine, *The Lotus* (Kansas City: Hudson-Kimberly Co., January 15, 1896) which contains two ads for *The Bibelot*. They are the same ad because, strangely enough, this copy of the *Lotus* contains two portions of the same magazine, each containing the *Bibelot* ad. Odd.

(7) Remember what I said at the end of #4 above? The following is an example of why I like to keep this fellow happy. My source contacted me about a copy of Swinburne's *Poems & Ballads* (Mosher, 1904), one of only 15 copies printed on Japan vellum. That's pretty nice in and of itself, but there was a bonus! It was Henry William Poor's copy (copy #2 with Poor's leather bookplate) and folded inside the book is a two-page typed letter signed by Mosher. The letter is to Henry William Poor in New York, dated Nov. 8, 1904. In it Mosher clearly indicates he's sending along this particular book. The letter is full of rather nifty information from the publisher to one of his best customers, even discussing the pure vellum books he put into the mail for Mr. Poor. It's the first and only letter from Mosher to Poor that I've ever seen, much less owned. So that's why I like to keep this source plenty happy! One never knows...

(8) The short mystery novel, *Fair Play's a Jewel*, just came out in paperback. Since it uses Thomas Bird Mosher to help carry along the storyline, I ordered five copies, and then the author, Robert Bruce Stewart, sent me two more—one signed on the title-page, and the other inscribed on the half-title, "*Phil, Thanks for all the help with Mosher. I hope I didn't take too many liberties with the poor man! Bob Stewart.*" Ummm... well.... maybe a few stretches of the imagination. No matter, it's all great fun.

(9) Yet another book from Mosher's library with his bookplate: Edwin Markham's *The Man with the Hoe and Other Poems*. NY: Doubleday & McClure Company, 1899. Actually Mosher had two copies of this title.

There are two more things I want to mention, both of which may be classified in the sentimental department. First, there is a street-level brass plaque at 45 Exchange Street in Portland, Maine. This August 16<sup>th</sup> it will have been mounted 25 YEARS AGO on the front of the building for every city resident, passerby, and tourist to see. Its message is simple:

## The Mosher Books

THOMAS BIRD MOSHER

PORTRLAND'S "PASSIONATE PIRATE"

JUST ABOVE, ON THE SECOND FLOOR OF THIS BUILDING, WAS THE OFFICE OF THOMAS B. MOSHER WHO PUBLISHED OVER 750 BOOKS OF FINE LITERATURE FROM 1891-1923. MOSHER'S BEAUTIFUL BOOKS HELPED INFLUENCE A GENERATION OF PRINTERS AND BOOK DESIGNERS IN THE AMERICAN PRINTING ARTS MOVEMENT.

FOLLOWING MOSHER'S DEATH IN 1923, THE MOSHER PRESS CONTINUED UNDER THE ABLE DIRECTION OF HIS LONGTIME ASSISTANT, MISS FLORA MACDONALD LAMB.

1990

Three patrons made it possible, David Turner, Jean-François Vilain, me, and David Robinson, then of Dirigo Management Company, gave us permission to have it mounted there, and a small gathering of twenty-two people stood by for the unveiling of the plaque. Some folks said they'd give it a year or two and then some hooligan would probably deface it or tear it off the building. Well it's still there 25 years and hopefully will last yet another 25 or more years.

Sue Bishop at the Mosher plaque  
at 45 Exchange St., Portland, ME



The second thing I wish to do is publically **thank Gordon Pfeiffer** for all his hard work as a member of the Delaware Bibliophiles, as its president, and then continuing as its longstanding editor of *Endpapers*. Gordon worked with me to present over 80 essays from my “pen” alone over the years, and of course he presented many a DB’s essays, articles, and announcements issue after issue after issue. Gordon has been a stalwart ally over the years and I wish him every success in his new Virginia surroundings. Of course he makes trips back to Wilmington and New Castle, and his collections have enriched the University of Delaware’s holdings, but my personal thanks go to him for being such a collecting enthusiast who enjoyed the “finds” of others almost more those of his own. I will miss our communication over essays submitted, and dedicate my four submissions for this issue to Gordon. I look forward to working with Bob Walsh or whomever else might take the reins as editor of the Delaware Bibliophiles’ newsletter, *Endpapers*.

Philip R. Bishop  
6 August 2015