1900 Books from the Collection of Robert Rosenthal

An Exhibition in the Department of Special Collections

January 29–May 10, 1996

The University of Chicago Library
As Curator of Special Collections from 1953 to 1989, Robert Rosenthal (1926–1989) developed rare book, manuscript, and archival collections to support the teaching and research programs of the University of Chicago. He also built several personal collections, each one illustrating his conviction that an interesting book collection can be put together on almost any theme, if imagination and vision are brought to the task. Rosenthal defined collecting categories for himself that testify to his sense of humor, his creativity, his remarkable eye for finding good books, and his extraordinary ability to teach the unexpected through books.

Several collections formed by Robert Rosenthal reflect his interest in printing and the book arts, including books issued by particular publishers or with bindings by noted designers. He also collected series books, bad dog books, corn imagery, popular astronomy, and practical manuals. Among the collections that gave him great pleasure were those that gathered books with little in common other than a chance word in the title: books with the names of his wife or children in the title, or books whose titles were double entendres.

The organizing principle of the collection featured in this exhibition is the publication date 1900. In this exercise, Rosenthal observed, “Discovery comes after the fact—where ‘nothing’ previously existed at least on the face of it, i.e. the date 1900.” He delighted in surprising booksellers and librarians, recognizing that he was challenging standard assumptions about “collectible” books. The 1900 collection amply proves Rosenthal’s theory that a group of books focusing on a particular theme takes on a significance not apparent at the outset.

American book publishing was flourishing in 1900, with major centers of activity in New York, Chicago, Boston, and Philadelphia. Widespread mechanization of nearly every phase of book production made it possible to manufacture books relatively quickly and cheaply in great quantities. Eye-catching decorative cloth covers enlivened and helped to sell popular books several years before dust jackets took hold, and book designers thrived. American publishers issued a diverse assortment of publications from bestselling historical novels to new editions of literary classics, from religious tracts to travel literature, from marriage manuals to beautifully illustrated books for children.

Robert Rosenthal’s collection of books published in the year 1900 offered a dizzying array of possibilities for an exhibition. The collection, made up of about 600 books, includes materials published in several different countries, on a variety of subjects, aimed at a wide range of audiences. At first, the books seemed to have little in common beyond their date of publication or copyright (designated as c1900). In selecting books for the exhibition, however, particular features of the collection began to emerge. Books published in the United States predominate, and Chicago imprints are plentiful. The majority of the books are trade editions, and a high percentage of them are works of popular fiction. Many are handsome examples of typical book design of the period, and of these, a significant number of designers is identifiable.

To highlight these strengths of the collection, the exhibition is divided into two roughly equal sections, the first emphasizing book publishing and design, and the second focusing on specific genres of publications. Collectively, the works in “1900: Books from the Collection of Robert Rosenthal” provide a window into the culture of a particular moment and a snapshot of individual books available to the American reading public at the turn of the century. The University of Chicago Library extends its deep appreciation to Jane Rosenthal for her generosity in lending these books for the exhibition.
FRANK BERKELEY SMITH

Elizabeth von Arnim.
Gift from Sidney F. Huttner to Robert Rosenthal.

William Wymark Jacobs.
Baptism by Fire. New York: George H. Doran, 1900.
Printed at the Press of George H. Ellis, Boston.

Ralph Francis Wymark.

Will Bradley, Frank Hazenplug, Amy Sacker, FP and M.

Ralph Connon.

George Cary Eggleson.

Helen Hunt Jackson.
Cover designs by Amy M. Sacker.

Henry Van Dyke.
Cover signed: FP.
Printed at the Trow Directory Printing and Bookbinding Co., New York.

Printed at the Norwood Press, Norwood, Mass.

Marion Harland and Albert Payson Terhune.
Dr. Dale: A Story Without a Moral. New York: Dodd, Mead, 1900.

William Wymark Jacobs.
Gift from Sidney F. Huttner to Robert Rosenthal.

Arthur Wing Pinero.

Elizabeth von Arnim.

Frank Berkeley Smith.
Gift from Sidney F. Huttner to Robert Rosenthal.

William Wymark Jacobs.
Gift from Sidney F. Huttner to Robert Rosenthal.

Ralph Francis Wymark.

Will Bradley, Frank Hazenplug, Amy Sacker, FP and M.

Ralph Connon.

George Cary Eggleson.

Helen Hunt Jackson.
Cover designs by Amy M. Sacker.

Henry Van Dyke.
Cover signed: FP.
Printed at the Trow Directory Printing and Bookbinding Co., New York.

Other Notable Bindings

Clyde Fitch.
Cover and frontispiece illustration by Everett Shinn; photographs of the stage production, starring Julia Marlowe, by Byron.

Jerome K. Jerome.

lk Marvel.

Eugene McCarthy.
Familiar Fish: Their Habitat and Capture: A Practical Book on Fresh-Water Game Fish. With an introduction by Dr. David Starr Jordan. New York: D. Appleton, 1900.

Martha Capps Oliver, compiler.
Printed at the Press of J. J. Little, Astor Place, New York.

Frances Hubbard Litchfield Turnbull.
Printed at the Devinne Press.

Illustrated Books

Kenneth Grahan.
Cover designed by Maxfield Parrish.
Printed by American Photogravure Co., U.S.A.

A. H. Malan, editor.

Emmond Rostand.

Maurice Thompson.
Printed at the Devinne Press.

Richard Whiting.
Printed at the Devinne Press.

Harper and Brothers (New York)

John Kendrick Bangs.

Will Carleton.

Charles King.
Illustrated by R. E. Zogbaum.

Frank Richard Stockton.

Mrs. Humphry Ward.

Charles Scribner’s Sons (New York)

Josephine Dodge Daskam.
Cover designed by Sarah Whitman.
Printed by D. B. Updike at the Merrymount Press, Boston.

Martha Rockée Flint.
A Garden of Samples. New York: C. Scribner’s, 1900.
Printed at the Heinemann Press, Boston.

Oliver Herford.
The Rhythmic Earthquake & Other Fables and Verses. With many pictures by the author. New York: C. Scribner’s, 1900, c1898.
Printed at the University Press, Cambridge, Mass.

Richard Thayer Holbrook.

Edith Wharton.
The Touchstone. New York: C. Scribner’s, 1900.
Printed by D. B. Updike at the Merrymount Press, Boston.

Herbert S. Stone & Company (Chicago)

George Ade.
Cover designed by Frederic W. Goudy; title page designed by Frank Hazenplug.
Printed by R. R. Donnelley and Sons Company at the Lakeside Press, Chicago, III.

George Ade.
Cover designed by Frederic W. Goudy; title page designed by Frank Hazenplug.
Printed by R. R. Donnelley and Sons Company at the Lakeside Press, Chicago, III.

Egerton Castle.
Cover designed by Frank Hazenplug.

Amy Leslie.
Printed by R. R. Donnelley and Sons Company at the Lakeside Press, Chicago, III.

Frank Frankfort Moore.
Printed by R. R. Donnelley and Sons Company at the Lakeside Press, Chicago, III.

Frank Frankfort Moore.
The Jesamy Bride. Chicago and New York: H. S. Stone, 1900, c1896.

A. C. McClurg (Chicago)

Frances Weston Carruth.

Mary Nelson Carter.

Margaret Horton Potter.

Mary Imlay Taylor.

Mary Imlay Taylor.
The Cobbler of Nimes. Chicago: A. C. McClurg, 1900.
Cover designed by Frederic Goudy.

Small Presses


Robert Williams Buchanan.
One of 400 copies.

Jose-Maria de Heredia.
One of 750 copies, designed by Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue.
Printed at the University Press, Cambridge, Mass.

Elbert Hubbard.
Little Journeys to the Homes of English Authors: William Morris. East Aurora, N.Y.: Roycrofters, 1900, c1899.
No. 732 of 947 illuminated copies, signed by the author.

William Vaughan Moody.
Printed at the Press of George H. Ellis, Boston.

François Villon.

Best Sellers of 1900

Irvings Bucheller.

Mary Cholmondeley.

Winston Churchill.

Charles Frederick Goss.
The Redemption of David Corson. Indianapolis: Bowen-Merrill, c1900. Cover designed by Frederic W. Goudy. Printed by Braunworth, Munn & Barber, Printers and Binders, Brooklyn, N.Y.

Robert Grant.

Mary Johnston.

Maurice Thompson.

New Editions of Old Favorites

Honoré de Balzac.

Geoffrey Chaucer.

Alphonse Daudet.

Nathaniel Hawthorne.

Victor Hugo.

Robert Louis Stevenson.

William Makepeace Thackeray.

Travel Literature

William Elroy Curtis.
Between the Andes and the Ocean: An Account of an Interesting Journey Down the West Coast of South America from the Intibuna of Panama to the Straits of Magellan. Chicago: H. S. Stone, 1900.

Thomas G. Thrum.

William Chambers Morrow.

John C. Calhoun Newton.
Japan: Country, Court, and People. New York: Chicago: Toronto: F. H. Revell, 1900. (Mission Study Reference Library, no. 2)

Rand McNally and Company.

George Warrington Steven.

Laurence Houseman.

Frederick Brotherton Meyer.

Fanny Wheeler Hart.

Margaret Elizabeth Munson Sangster.

Books for Children

Jacob Abbott.
Rollo in Geneva. Chicago: W. B. Conkey, c1900.

Elbridge S. Brooks.

Mabel Dearmer.

John Howard Jewett.

Gift from Emily Rosenthal to her father.
Dinah Marie Mulock Craik.

William Nicholson.

Alice Lewis Richards.

Religious and Inspirational Books

Charles Fletcher Dole.

John Fiske.

Le Roy Hooker.
William Alexander Parsons Martin.  
*The Siege in Peking: China Against the World.*  
New York; Chicago; Toronto:  
F. H. Revell, 1900.  
Printed at the Caxton Press, New York.

Spencer Randolph.  

William E. Simmons.  

**Humor Books**

John Kendrick Bangs.  

Eugene Field.  
*The Tribune Primer.* With original illustrations by John C. Frohne. Boston:  
H. A. Dickerman, c1900.

Eugene Field.  
*The Tribune Primer.* Boston: Privately printed, 1900.

Samuel Ellsworth Kiser.  
Printed at the Press of George H. Ellis, Boston.

George Wilbur Peck.  
*Peck's Box Book.* Illustrated by H. E. Patterson.  
Chicago: Homewood, 1900.

Imaginary Lectures: Reported by Walter Satry.  
Printed for the Publishers of The Morningside . . . on the Quadrangle of Columbia University . . . 1900.  
Printed at the Cheltenham Press, New York.  
No. 223 of 500 numbered copies.

**Books from Other Countries**

S. R. Bottone.  

Joseph Conrad.  
*Lord Jim: A Tale.* Edinburgh and London:  
W. Blackwood, 1900.

Gerhart Hauptmann.  
*Schkuck und Jau.* 3. Aufl. Berlin:  
S. Fischer, 1900.


George Barnett Smith.  

Robert Louis Stevenson.  

C. Forward.  

**Further Reading**


