

## Collecting Henry Adams

R. Eden Martin

Adams  
in 1873

Henry Adams is considered by many to be one of the great American prose writers. The Board of the Modern Library, for example, selected his masterpiece, *The Education of Henry Adams*,<sup>1</sup> as the best non-fiction book published in English since 1900.<sup>2</sup>

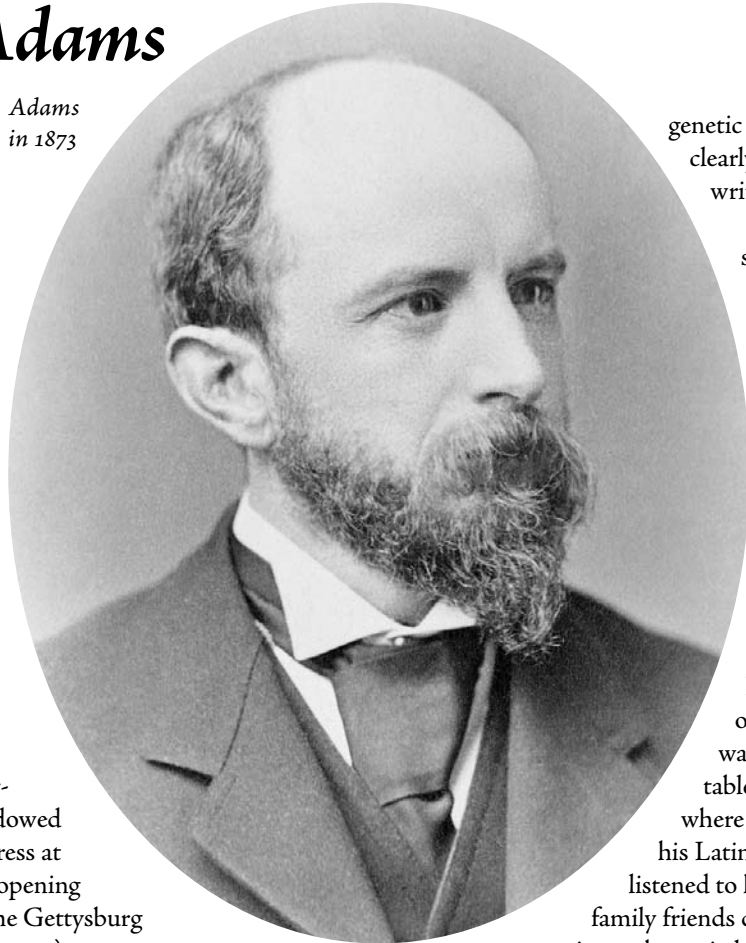
The great-grandson of our second President and grandson of our sixth, Henry Adams lived at a time when America's best prose writers produced non-fiction – much of it history. Henry wrote an outstanding set of volumes on the Jefferson and Madison administrations, as well as other historical and biographical works. But the two books for which he is best remembered today – *Mont Saint Michel and Chartres*, and the *Education* – though ostensibly about medieval art and his own life, were efforts to identify the underlying forces of history – the deep causes of change. He thought there might be something akin to the Second Law of Thermodynamics at work in human affairs; and he wanted to find it and use it to predict the future.

Henry Brooks Adams<sup>3</sup> was born February 16, 1838, the son of Charles Francis Adams and Abigail Brooks Adams. The marriage of Charles and Abigail united politics with wealth. The Adams family itself was far from poor; but Abigail's father was reportedly the richest man in Boston. As a result, Henry Adams was always at the center of interlocking networks of influence, social elites, and money. He remembered later that when his grandfather, John Quincy Adams, died in 1848, the coffin traveled in quasi-royal procession for two weeks on its way from Washington to Boston; and Edward Everett, then president of Harvard College and one of Abigail's brothers-in-law, delivered the funeral oration. (Everett later gave a long-winded

and overshadowed address at the opening of the Gettysburg cemetery.)

With his intellectual gifts and family advantages, Henry had been dealt the best hand imaginable. In the *Education*, Henry wrote (referring to himself in the third person), "Probably no child, born in the year [1838], held better cards than he. Whether life was an honest game of chance, or whether the cards were marked and forced, he could not refuse to play his excellent hand."<sup>4</sup> If his father Charles Francis would not be President (he ran for Vice President in 1848 with Martin Van Buren on the Free Soil ticket), then surely Henry or one of his brothers would at some point be in the running.

Henry had five siblings: an older sister Louisa, older brothers Charles Francis Jr. and John, younger sister Mary, and younger brother Brooks. Three of the brothers would become writers. The Adams family



genetic structure clearly contained a writer's gene. The responsibility for Henry's education rested with his father, whose private library of 18,000 volumes was the largest in Boston.<sup>5</sup> From the age of 10, Henry was assigned a table in the library where he worked on his Latin grammar and listened to his father and family friends discuss such topics as the anti-slavery move-

ment.<sup>6</sup> His father also read the poems of Longfellow and Tennyson to the children.

Henry pretended to view his own education as a failure:

The boy Henry soon became a desultory reader of every book he found readable, but these were commonly eighteenth-century historians because his father's library was full of them. In the want of positive instincts, he drifted into the mental indolence of history.<sup>7</sup>

When he was 12 Henry began attending a private Latin school in Boston to prepare him for Harvard. He was bored by it, and when the time came to leave he

felt no sensation but one of unqualified joy that this experience had ended. [These early years] of a possible education were wasted

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in doing imperfectly what might have been done perfectly in one, and in any case would have had small value.<sup>8</sup>

He defined a "schoolmaster" as "a man employed to tell lies to little boys."<sup>9</sup>

Henry started the Harvard College phase of his education in 1854 at the age of 16. His biographer notes that he was something of a rebel, having once been admonished for improper dress and other times for smoking in the Yard, lounging in Chapel and missing prayers.<sup>10</sup> Before Harvard, Henry had attended church with his family every Sunday, but "neither to him nor to his brothers or sisters was religion real. Even the mild discipline of the Unitarian church was so irksome that they all threw it off at the first possible moment, and never afterwards entered a church."<sup>11</sup>

Henry's record at Harvard fell short of the level those familiar with his later scholarship might expect. Although he was in the top third of his class in Latin, Greek, and French, he was weak in German, chemistry, and physics. He was middling in math though he claimed that he "failed lamentably." His strongest subjects, predictably, were in the classics and composition, where he was ranked 5th of 94 in one class and 2nd in another. Henry later came to regard himself as an evolutionist. He was fascinated by geology and attended the lectures of Louis Agassiz, who was on the wrong side of the debate over Darwinism. When Henry later had occasion to review the class-lists, he found himself precisely in the middle. Yet the years in Cambridge cannot have been the entire failure he later claimed. By the age of 20 young Adams had accumulated a respectable library of something over 100 titles.

When Henry later wrote disparagingly of his own "education," he used the term in different senses. Sometimes he referred to what students learn in books or classes. At other times, he referred to his understanding of the conduct of people in public office – why they did what they did, and how their conduct should be judged from a moral standpoint. In at least the first sense, he thought his own Harvard education a failure.

Harvard College... taught little, and that little ill, but it left the mind open, free from bias, ignorant of facts, but docile.<sup>12</sup>

For success in the life imposed on him he needed, as afterwards appeared, the facile use of only four tools: – Mathematics; French; German, and Spanish. With these, he could master in very short time any special

branch of inquiry... These four tools were necessary to his success in life, but he never controlled any one of them.<sup>13</sup>

If Harvard did not educate Henry, it gave him his first opportunity to write for publication. During his first year he wrote an historical sketch that was published in the newly-founded *Harvard Magazine*, and he later contributed several other prose works. Before long he was elected editor of the magazine. Perhaps even more satisfying, he was chosen Class Day orator for his graduation ceremony in June 1858, where he spoke about the dangers of commercialism.<sup>14</sup> Henry later claimed that he could not remember what he had said, but he recalled that one of his relatives found the oration "singularly wanting in enthusiasm," while another observer commented on Henry's "perfect self-possession." He concluded that self-possession was all Harvard had given him:

Self-possession was the strongest part of Harvard College, which certainly taught men to stand alone... He was ready to stand up before any audience in America or Europe, with nerves rather steadier for the excitement, but whether he should ever have anything to say remained to be proved. As yet he knew nothing. Education had not begun.<sup>15</sup>

After completing his studies at Harvard, like many sons of wealthy American families in the mid-19th century, Henry headed off to Berlin. His father hoped that he would learn German and commence his study of civil law, which would lead to a career in the law. But Henry soon concluded that he was fit for neither German nor his other studies:

[T]he curious and perplexing result of the total failure of German education was that the student's only clear gain, – his single step to a higher life, – came from time wasted; studies neglected; vices indulged; education reversed; – it came from the despised beer-garden and music-hall; and it was accidental, unintended, unforeseen.<sup>16</sup>

Henry soon escaped from Berlin to Dresden, and from there to Switzerland, the Rhine, and finally Italy, where he met Garibaldi and wrote letters to the *Boston Daily Courier* about his travels. In Rome he experienced some of the aesthetic sensations that would later be reflected in his work on French cathedrals:

[I]n 1860 the lights and shadows were still mediæval, and mediæval Rome was alive; the shadows breathed and glowed, full of soft forms felt by lost

senses. No sand-blast of science had yet skinned off the epidermis of history, thought and feeling. The pictures were uncleaned, the churches unrestored, the ruins unexcavated. Mediaeval Rome was sorcery.<sup>17</sup>

In the fall of 1860, just before the Presidential election, Henry returned to Quincy to begin the study of law. As the months passed, Abraham Lincoln was elected and the country moved inexorably toward war. When the new Administration was formed, Secretary of State Seward asked Lincoln to appoint Henry's father Minister to Great Britain. Charles needed a private secretary, and quickly settled on his son Henry. So Henry spent the next seven years, including the war years, in England. He would later write that this period "was a golden time for me and altered my whole life...."<sup>18</sup>

Because his duties in England were not heavy, he found time to write a series of anonymous dispatches to the *New York Times*. His position – as son rather than secretary – gained him access to some of the leading minds in England, including such liberals and reformers as Monckton Milnes, Charles Gaskell and John Stuart Mill. Milnes introduced Henry to the remarkable poet and talker Algernon Swinburne. He also met the geologist Charles Lyell. Henry wrote with remarkable prescience to his brother that he was thinking about a career in geology and science:

I tell you these are great times. Man has mounted science, and is now run away with it. I firmly believe that before many centuries more, science will be the master of man. The engines he will have invented will be beyond his strength to control. Some day science may have the existence of mankind in its power, and the human race commit suicide, by blowing up the world.<sup>19</sup>

This theme of the acceleration of scientific knowledge and the unleashing of power – and their contrast with the medieval "soft forms felt by lost senses" – would recur again and again in his thinking and writing.

Henry also met visiting dignitaries such as Secretary Seward's New York supporter and friend Thurlow Weed. We think of Weed today as the archetype political manipulator, but Henry saw him in a different light as he endeavored to understand and evaluate the motives of men in public life:

Thurlow Weed was a complete American education in himself. His mind was naturally strong and beautifully balanced; his temper never seemed ruffled; his manners were carefully perfect in the style of benevolent simplicity; .... Of all flowers in the garden of education, confidence was becoming the rarest; but before Mr. Weed went away, young Adams followed him about... with sympathy and affection, much like a little dog....

The effect of power and publicity on all men is the aggravation of self, a sort of tumor that ends by killing the victim's sympathies; a diseased appetite, like a passion for drink or perverted tastes; one can scarcely use expressions too strong to describe the violence of egotism it stimulates; and Thurlow Weed was one of the exceptions, a rare immune... He was not jealous. He grasped power, but not office.<sup>20</sup>

Another visiting American, the historian John G. Palfrey, suggested to Henry that he use the resources of the British Museum library to research the story of the saving of Captain John Smith by Pocahontas. Henry's article setting forth the inconsistencies among various versions of Smith's story was later published in a leading American journal, the *North American Review*.<sup>21</sup> Another article by Adams on British government finance in 1816 appeared in the same journal within a few months of the Smith piece. These small steps advanced Adams' reputation as a historian and literary craftsman.

Charles Francis Adams' service as minister came to an end in the spring of 1868, and Henry, now 30 years old, was ready to return to America. But to do what? He had no interest in the profession of law. His first thought was to write political essays and articles for newspapers in New York and perhaps Boston. A reformer, he moved back to Washington and began to write on finance, politics, and civil service reform. (One of these early articles, about the corruption of the Grant Administration, was reprinted and separately published by the Democratic Party as, "A Radical Indictment! The Administration – Its Cor-



The Democratic Party reprinted this early essay by Adams.

ruptions & Shortcomings." It identified Henry as "a prominent Republican.") But Henry knew such articles would not lead to a career; so he treaded water for months and traveled. He thought his experience in Washington contributed to his education in an odd way:

One seldom can see much education in the buck of a broncho; even less in the kick of a mule. The lesson it teaches is only that of getting out of the animal's way. This was the lesson that Henry Adams had learned over and over again in politics since 1860.<sup>22</sup>

Then in the fall of 1870 the new President of Harvard College, Charles Eliot, offered him the job of assistant professor of history. About the same time Henry was offered the editorship of the *North American Review*, based in Cambridge. He quickly turned down both offers. As he wrote later, "Adams knew nothing about history, and much less about teaching, while he knew more than enough about Harvard College."<sup>23</sup> So he thanked President Eliot for the offer and said no.

But his parents and brothers changed his mind. They persuaded him that if the President of Harvard wanted him, perhaps he knew more than Henry.

One cannot take oneself quite seriously in

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such matters; it could not much affect the sum of solar energies whether one went on dancing with girls in Washington, or began talking to boys at Cambridge. The good people who thought it did matter had a sort of right to guide. One could not reject their advice; still less disregard their wishes.<sup>24</sup>

Henry met with President Eliot and told him, "I know nothing about Mediaeval History." President Eliot firmly replied, "If you will point out to me any one who knows more, Mr. Adams, I will appoint him."<sup>25</sup>

For the next nine months, during the 1870-71 academic year, the new Assistant Professor "exhausted all his strength in trying to keep one day ahead of his duties." Moreover, he faced the problem faced by all history teachers: Should I teach history as a catalogue of facts or as the unrolling of events according to a plan – an "evolution" of one kind or another? Adams seems to have believed in the catalogue theory, but wished for a theory of evolution.

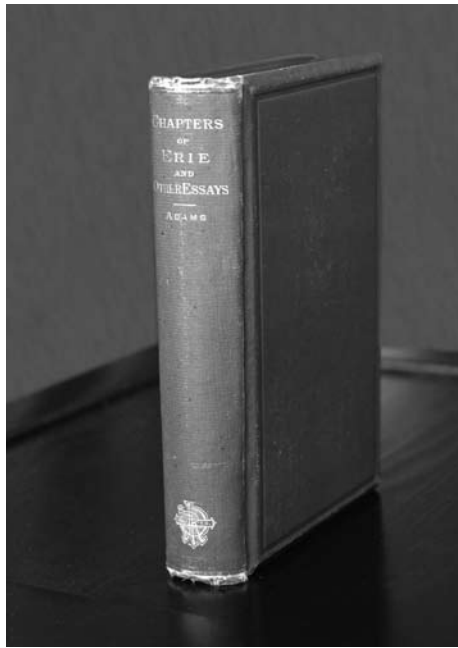
In essence incoherent and immoral, history had either to be taught as such, – or falsified....

Adams had no theory of evolution to teach, and could not make the facts fit one.<sup>26</sup>

So which was it to be? The catalogue or an intelligible evolution? The rest of Adams' life as historian and writer was to be spent seeking intelligibility.

During his first year on the faculty, Henry met two men who would become his close friends: the artist John La Farge, and the geologist Clarence King. King particularly delighted Adams, who envied his knowledge of science. King was also witty and charming. He had organized the government's survey paralleling the transcontinental railroad. Henry perceived in him "a touch of Alcibiades or Alexander. One Clarence King only existed in the world."<sup>27</sup>

As his first year on the faculty was coming to a close, Henry wrote a revealing letter to one of his promising students, Henry Cabot Lodge. Adams the professor was too ambitious – and too talented a writer – simply to lead undergraduates through their historical paces. The most respected writers of that period were not novelists. They were historians, many of whom lived in Boston, and Adams knew them. Could he not write history as well as



Chapters of Erie included six essays by Henry Adams and three by his brother Charles.

they – books that would sell?

The question is whether the historico-literary line is practically worth following; not whether it will amuse or improve you. Can you make it *pay*? either money, reputation, or any other solid value... No one has done better and won more in any business or pursuit, than has been acquired by men like Prescott, Motley, Frank Parkman, Bancroft, and so on in historical writing; none of them of extraordinary gifts... What they did, can be done by others... With it, comes social dignity, European reputation, and a foreign mission to close.<sup>28</sup>

About the same time, Henry met Marian "Clover" Hooper, the daughter of a wealthy oculist. They were married on June 27, 1872.

As Henry's second year as a Harvard history teacher began, he and his brother Charles joined in issuing the first book in which Henry is listed as an author. Published by the Boston firm James R. Osgood, "late Ticknor & Fields," *Chapters of Erie and Other Essays*<sup>29</sup> reproduced three essays by Charles dealing with railroad issues, and six by Henry, earlier versions of which had appeared in the *North American Review* or other learned journals. *Chapters of Erie* was a start, but was certainly not a sustained book-length historical narrative of the sort produced by Prescott, Parkman and Bancroft.

Henry wanted to write American history; and to do that, consistent with his teaching responsibilities, he had to edge his way out

of the Harvard medieval history courses and into American history. By 1873 he was teaching a course in American colonial history; and three years later he was ready to initiate a new course in the history of the United States from 1789 to 1840. The research and thinking that went into this new course would eventually lead to his greatest piece of historical craftsmanship.

A book review which he wrote in 1876 set forth his developing view of the historian's mission. Perhaps inspired by his earlier readings in geology, perhaps by his friend King, he was by now convinced that underlying causes of historical trends could be identified, and that these trends would help explain the past and predict the future:

If the historian will only consent to shut his eyes for a moment to the microscopic analysis of personal motives and idiosyncrasies, he cannot but become conscious of a *silent pulsation* that commands his respect, a *steady movement that resembles in its mode of operation the mechanical action of Nature herself*.<sup>30</sup>

But what about his earlier view that history was "in essence, incoherent and immoral?" And if there was some underlying "silent pulsation" – something like the geological forces of nature – what was it?

No such pulsation could be found in the first published result of Adams' extended researches into American history. This was his *Documents Relating to New England Federalism, 1800-1815* (1877). In it Henry vindicated his grandfather John Quincy Adams' view that certain ultra-Federalists in New England had planned to commit treason during the period of the War with England.

As Henry led his students unenthusiastically through materials on the first half-century of the history of the United States, the son of Albert Gallatin, Jefferson's first Secretary of the Treasury, came to him with a proposal that Adams edit Gallatin's papers and write a biography. Adams jumped at the chance. He was tired of teaching, tired of editing the *North American Review*, tired of Harvard (weary of "railing at the idiocies of a university education"), and eager for an excuse to return to Washington where much of the research on Gallatin would have to be done. Shortly after his move to Washington in the fall of 1877, he wrote to a friend about his sense of release and renewal:

The fact is, I gravitate to a capital by a primary

law of nature. This is the only place in America where society amuses me, or where life offers variety. Here, too, I can fancy that we are of use in the world, for we distinctly occupy niches which ought to be filled....<sup>31</sup>

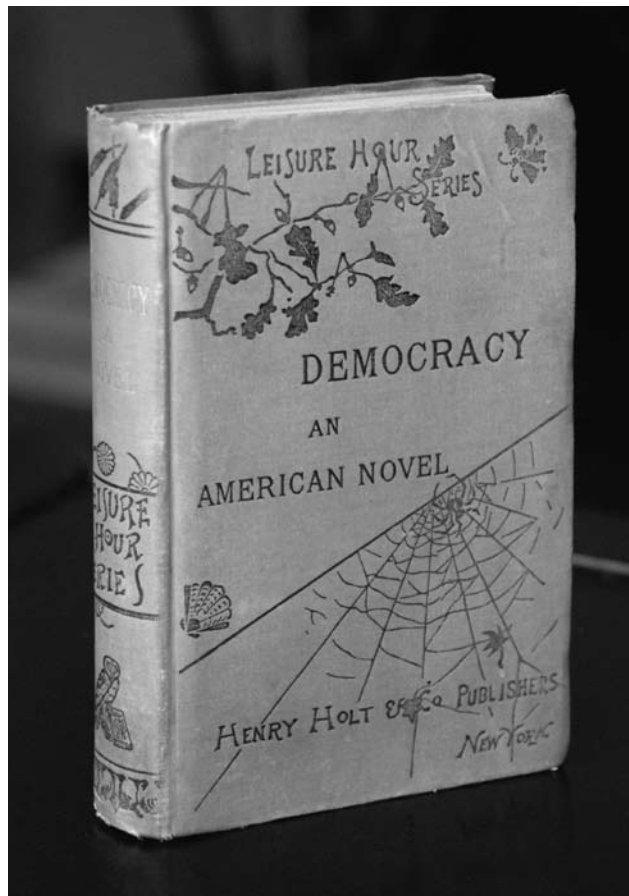
Although Henry would later spend large chunks of time outside the United States, he would never regard any place other than Washington as home.

Henry and Clover took up residence in Washington in a house just north and west of Lafayette Square. Patricia O'Toole, in *The Five of Hearts* (1990), subtitled "an intimate portrait of Henry Adams and his friends," described a typical day in Henry and Clover's life:

They started their day on horseback, exploring the wilds of Rock Creek Park or... riding trails cut by the Union army during the Civil War. After a noon breakfast frequently shared with guests, Henry went off to the State Department archives to work on his history. At five o'clock he returned for tea and more guests, and in the evening they either dined out or entertained. In the summer when Washingtonians fled the heat, the Adamses decamped to their cottage at Beverly Farms on Boston's North Shore....<sup>32</sup>

Two of Henry's closest friends in Washington were John Hay and his wife. A young diplomat and amateur poet, Hay had earlier served as one of President Lincoln's secretaries. He would later join John Nicolay, another former Lincoln secretary, in writing a long biography of the great president. The two Adamses, the two Hays, and King became the "Five of Hearts" and had specially-printed notepaper prepared for their own private use.

Work on Gallatin's papers and biography moved along quickly. The first volume of Gallatin's writings was in type by the late fall of 1877; by Christmas Eve Henry was able to send off the first three chapters of the biography to the family for approval. He enlisted his friend, the historian George Bancroft, to read his proof sheets. After about two years of scholarly work, the full three-volume *Writings of Albert Gallatin*, "edited by Henry Adams," was published,



*Democracy was published anonymously, and Adams' authorship was not revealed until after his death.*

first in Philadelphia, and shortly after, in England. The biography, *The Life of Albert Gallatin*, bound in brown cloth, appeared almost simultaneously with the *Writings*.

The effort Henry put into his Gallatin project must have made the public reaction all the more disappointing. As his biographer writes, Henry poured into this "his first major literary undertaking" so much of "his personal conviction and so thoroughly made himself a partisan of his hero that he always looked back upon the work with special affection." Adams superimposed on the conventional life-and-letters biography "an artistic and dramatic tension that was new."<sup>33</sup>

The reviews, however, were negative or dismissive. The *North American Review*, which Henry had only recently ceased to edit, brushed aside both the biography and the edited writings as "a valuable repository of information," but "too voluminous": it "has too much of the character of a digest of material, to be attractive to a general reader." The *Nation's* reviewer wrote that Henry's biography "falls little short of being an outrage both on Albert Gallatin and on everyone who wishes to know anything

about him." (The *Nation* reviewer wrote anonymously – so Henry may never have learned that the reviewer was his own older brother, Charles Francis Jr.) One of the work's few admirers was Henry's former Harvard student, Henry Cabot Lodge.<sup>34</sup>

As Henry was finishing his Gallatin volumes, he was also at work on a novel, *Democracy*. Set in Washington, and written from the reformist point of view, it was about politics – how and why politicians act to promote their own interests rather than the public interest, and how to judge their acts from the standpoint of morality. The heroine, Mrs. Lightfoot Lee, a highly-principled lady, comes to know men in power and sees at close range how they behave. She seeks – as Adams did himself – to "get to the heart of the great American mystery of democracy and government." Mrs. Lee becomes a friend of Illinois Senator Silas P. Ratcliffe, who hungers after the Presidency.<sup>35</sup> Ratcliffe wishes to marry Mrs. Lee. But she learns that during the Civil War certain

funds had been borrowed to help keep Ratcliffe in office and Illinois in support of President Lincoln's war effort and that later, after the War, Senator Ratcliffe had supported a particular subsidy bill in order to obtain a bribe to pay off the loan. How is Ratcliffe to be judged? It was the old question whether the ends justify the means. Mrs. Lee took the view that they do not: "I will not share the profits of vice; I am not willing to be made a receiver of stolen goods, or to be put in a position where I am perpetually obliged to maintain that immorality is a virtue!"<sup>36</sup> Eventually, she flees in disgust.

This paper is about how Henry Adams' books came to be written and published – how they first saw the light of day – rather than an evaluation of their merits. But it is hard to keep the compartments tight. I found *Democracy* interesting and well crafted. But embedded in it is a moral simplicity that is irritating. Perhaps Ratcliffe did behave badly. But can ends and means really be evaluated separately, without reference to each other? Might not a particular "misuse" of funds be wrong if its purpose

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were to advance the cause of a particular candidate – but right if its purpose and effect were to help save the Union? A great professor at Harvard Law School, Edward “Bull” Warren, was reportedly once asked whether the ends ever justified the means. He peered down at the questioning student and replied, “If they don’t, what does?”

Henry chose to publish *Democracy* (1880) anonymously. Only his publisher, Henry Holt, and a few others – including his friends Hay and King – knew he was the author. The fact of his authorship was not made public until Holt confirmed it in 1920, two years after Adams’ death.

Bound in white linen, *Democracy* appeared in March 1880 in the United States and April in London. One of the earliest notices, in the *New York Tribune*, suggested that many readers would see actual political figures portrayed in the book. Perhaps this was what attracted readers. Or perhaps it was the cynical tone, critical of the behavior of politicians at the pinnacle of American government. The *Atlantic* reviewer knew of “nothing in its way so good in our literature,” and the *Saturday Review* called it a “masterpiece.” In England the reviews were enthusiastic, perhaps because the English enjoyed the satirical attack on American democracy.<sup>37</sup>

Rumors and arguments about who wrote *Democracy* circulated for decades. In 1883 the appearance of another anonymous novel – written by Henry’s friend John Hay – generated similar guessing as to the identity of the author. Henry’s brother, Charles Francis Jr., who had so vigorously attacked Henry’s *Gallatin* biography, wrote a letter to the editor of *Nation* criticizing Hay’s book. He wrote: “It is written by the same hand that wrote the novel ‘*Democracy*’ some years ago.... It has the same coarse, half-educated touch.” When Henry learned of his brother’s attack, he wrote joyously to Hay: “I want to roll on the floor; to howl, kick and sneeze, to weep silent tears of thankfulness to a beneficent providence which has permitted me to see this day; and finally I want to drown my joy in oceans of Champagne...”<sup>38</sup>

Now that the writing of both *Gallatin* and *Democracy* was behind him, Henry was free to turn his attentions to his big project – Jefferson and Madison. His research in the State Department archives had led him to conclude that he needed access to

similar materials in England, France, and Spain. England was no problem. In Spain he obtained access to Grandfather John Quincy Adams’ dispatches. But France was a disappointment:

At the best of times Paris is to me a fraud and a snare; I dislike it, protest against it, despise its stage, condemn its literature, and have only a temperate regard for its cooking; but in December and January Paris is frankly impossible.<sup>39</sup>

The end of 1880 found Henry and Clover back in Washington in a rented house at 1607 H. Street, facing Lafayette Square. At about this time, Henry and Clover became friends of their neighbors, Senator Don Cameron, of Pennsylvania, and his wife Elizabeth. “The Don” did not interest Henry, but he found much to admire in Elizabeth.

With most of his archival research completed, Henry began drafting his book on the Jefferson and Madison administrations. But again, the path was interrupted. This time Henry was invited in March 1881 by John Morse, editor of the American Statesmen series, to prepare a volume on John Randolph of Roanoke. Adams embraced the project with enthusiasm, worked 10-hour days, and finished his first draft in three months.<sup>40</sup> *John Randolph* was published as part of the American Statesmen series by Houghton, Mifflin in October 1882.

Henry was oddly dissatisfied with it, in part because Randolph had been a strange and unattractive character, and Henry had not enjoyed stripping him to the bone: “The fault is in the enforced obligation to take that lunatic monkey au serieux.” He wrote apologetically to his editor, Morse, that it had turned out to be

...an unpleasant book.... The acidity is much too decided. The rule of a writer should be that of a salad-maker; let the vinegar be put in by a miser; the oil by a spendthrift. In this case however the tone was really decided by the subject, and the excess of acid is his.<sup>41</sup>

After finishing *Randolph*, Henry immediately undertook a similar work on Aaron Burr, thinking that he might volunteer it to Morse for the American Statesmen series. But Morse and he had not agreed on the project in advance; and when Henry submitted the draft for possible publication, Morse turned it down on the ground

that Burr was no “statesman.” Adams could easily have turned to another publisher. But he was irritated by Morse’s turn-down, and put the manuscript aside, apparently intending to publish it later as an “outrider” to his Jefferson and Madison volumes. The manuscript then disappeared. His biographer assumes that parts of it were woven into the main fabric of the Jefferson/Madison history.<sup>42</sup> Seven years were to pass before the first of these volumes appeared. In the meantime, there would be one more diversion.

Adams wrote novels in order to lay out intellectual themes. His *Democracy* had explored issues related to political corruption; and in the end, the heroine refuses to marry the corrupt Senator. In *Esther*, which he began to write in the fall of 1883, Adams dealt with the conflict he saw between religion and science. The heroine is torn between her affections for the paleontologist/scientist (whom Adams models after his friend Clarence King and names “Strong”) and the preacher (“Hazard”). One may easily imagine where Adams’ own sympathies fall. Yet the preacher’s views are not portrayed as those of an unsophisticated fundamentalist. Adams has the preacher say to Esther:

I am not afraid to lay bare my conscience to you.... The atheists offer no sort of bargain for one’s soul. Their scheme is all loss and no gain. At last both they and I come back to a confession of ignorance; the only difference between us is that my ignorance is joined with a faith and hope.<sup>43</sup>

In the end the preacher gives up his attempt to persuade Esther to marry him. But Esther declines to marry the scientist as well, because she loves the preacher. So no one gets what he or she wants, and things wind up in a muddle – perhaps reflecting Adams’ own attempt to reconcile religion and science.

As with *Democracy*, Adams arranged with Holt, his publisher, to have *Esther* appear without his name. When the book appeared in March 1884, the author was identified as “Frances Snow Compton.” Adams also insisted that there be no advertising, and no copies were given to editors or reviewers. Henry wanted to test his theory that books were made successful more by ads and puffery than by their own merits. Or perhaps the lack of advertising gave him an excuse if the book

failed. In any event, fail it did. Holt printed 1000 copies, of which only about half were sold. *Esther* was briefly noticed in *Publishers Weekly* and apparently reviewed by no one. Adams wrote to his publisher, "My experiment has failed.... My inference is that America reads nothing – advertised or not – except magazines." It apparently did not occur to him that his "experiment" had no chance of success: if the book sold badly, this could be due to its qualities – rather than lack of advertising; and even if it sold well, with advertising it might have sold more.

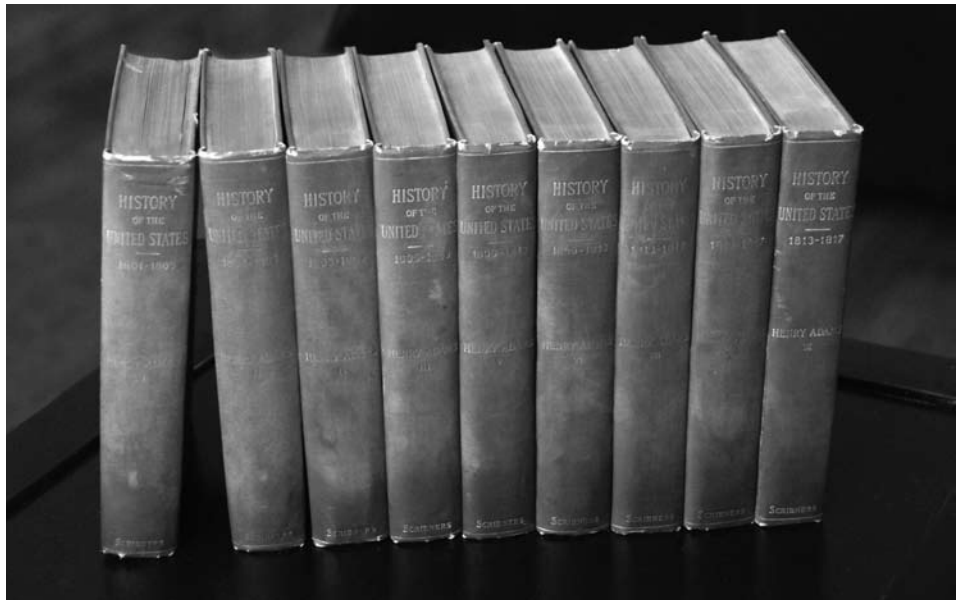
Yet Adams loved this unsuccessful little book. Of the very few people who knew he wrote it, one was his friend Elizabeth Cameron. Years later, after his Jefferson/Madison history had been published, Henry gave a touching explanation for why he had never allowed the book to be advertised: "I care more for one chapter, or any dozen pages of *Esther* than for the whole history, including maps and indexes; so much more, indeed, that I would not let anyone read the story for fear the reader should profane it."<sup>44</sup> Then why, one might ask, did he publish it at all?

Experienced book dealers have told me that *Esther* is not a rare book. About 500 copies were sold, and the work is far from a high spot of American literature. Yet I have been on the lookout for a first edition for years and have not seen it in a catalogue; and no copies of it are presently listed on AbeBooks. I suppose the collector should be grateful that there are still books for which to search – and wait.

As Henry worked to complete his Jefferson/Madison volumes, he was distracted by the construction of his new family home just opposite Lafayette Park and adjacent to the new home being built by his friend John Hay. (The site of these two homes is today occupied by the Hay-Adams Hotel.) But his principal distraction was his wife's mental health.

Clover's father became ill in 1884 and finally died of heart disease in April 1885. Adams' biographer believes that "it meant the end of the strongest attachment of her life."<sup>45</sup> During the following months, Clover sank deeply into depression. On December 6, 1885, she wrote a letter to her sister:

If I had one single point of character or goodness I would stand on that and grow back to



*The first trade edition of the Jefferson-Madison History.*

life. Henry is more patient and loving than words can express. God might envy him – he bears and hopes and despairs hour after hour.... Henry is beyond all words tenderer and better than all of you even.

The letter was never sent. Later that day, Henry was leaving the house for a walk when a lady called to see his wife. Henry went upstairs to see if she would receive the visitor. He found her on the floor. A physician was called, but it was too late. The initial newspaper report was that her death was caused by heart failure. But within three days, other newspapers disclosed that the coroner's report said she died through a self-administered dose of cyanide, a chemical she used in her photographic darkroom.<sup>46</sup>

Henry wrote to his English friend Godkin that two thoughts helped him cope with Clover's suicide:

One was that life could have no other experience so crushing. The other was that at least I had got out of life all the pleasure it had to give. I admit that fate at last has smashed the life out of me; but for twelve years I had everything I most wanted on earth.<sup>47</sup>

When he wrote his autobiographical *Education* toward the end of his life, he stopped his narrative in 1871 – before their marriage – and did not pick it up again until 1892. Before her death, Henry had hoped to travel with Clover to Japan. Now he decided to go ahead with the trip, accompanied by his friend, the artist John La Farge. After the mourning period and

arrangements were made, they left in April 1886. In Japan he collected porcelains and drawings, and explored shrines while La Farge painted.

Henry returned to the United States in November 1886 determined to bring the work on Jefferson/Madison to a close. He worked 10-hour days and hired a stenographer to help speed the work. In his spare time, he systematically destroyed his personal diaries. He also began negotiations with the artist, Saint-Gaudens, to create the mysterious memorial to Clover that now marks both their graves in Rock Creek Park in Washington. The idea for the memorial had occurred to him in Japan; he wanted it to reflect a Buddhist sense of timelessness. Henry was also becoming more and more attached to his Washington neighbor, Elizabeth Cameron, wife of the Pennsylvania Senator.

Adams' *History of the United States of America during the Jefferson and Madison Administrations* appeared one volume at a time, in strange order, over the period 1885 through 1891. Nine volumes dealt with the 16 years of Jefferson's and Madison's presidencies – two volumes for each of Jefferson's administrations, then two for Madison's first, and three volumes for his second administration.

The volumes on Jefferson's *second* administration appeared first, in a *private printing* of six copies, in 1885. This was done, Adams wrote the historian Parkman, "partly for safety, partly to secure the advantages of a first edition."<sup>48</sup> These reasons seem

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strange. A larger edition would just as securely have protected the copyright; and the advantages of a first edition of six copies seem a tad obscure today. In any event, Adams did not feel the need to secure these advantages for the volumes on Jefferson's first administration. Madison's first administration appeared next, in 1888, similarly in a *private printing* of six copies.

The first-in-logical-order two volumes covering Jefferson's first administration appeared in October 1889 in a first printing of 1500 copies. This was both the first edition and the trade edition. Henry also arranged for a "deluxe" edition on thin paper of 12 copies for "family and a few special friends." The trade edition of Jefferson's second administration, also two volumes and 1500 copies, came out in February 1890.

Madison's first administration, trade edition, appeared in September 1890, and his second administration, first and trade, in January 1891.

Henry calculated that he had spent 12 years of "unbroken labor," as well as \$20,000 traveling, collecting, and copying materials. According to his contract with the publisher, Scribner, he was to receive a 20% royalty after 2,000 copies. As it turned out, he received royalties during the next ten years of only \$5,000.<sup>49</sup> Henry described the effort and cost he put into this work as "rather more extravagant in proportion to his means than a racing-stable." He wrote that he thought he had only three serious readers: Abram Hewitt, Wayne McVeagh, and John Hay.<sup>50</sup>

The reviews at the time were positive, though some reviewers suggested that the work suffered from family bias. The *New York Times* called it a "historical work of great importance," and particularly complimented Adams' researches in the diplomatic archives. The *Critic* in New York called the narrative "brilliant." But the *Atlantic* and the *Nation* condemned it with faint praise. A letter published by the *New York Tribune* called Henry's work "a case of hereditary bias."<sup>51</sup> Adams' principal biographer believes that the reviewers did not appreciate the "novelty" and "grandeur" of the work – perhaps because they read it piecemeal; the trade edition volumes appeared over a period of 15 months.<sup>52</sup> Harvard offered him an honorary degree, but he turned it down.<sup>53</sup>

In a recent reappraisal of Adams as a

historian, however, Gary Wills calls these nine volumes "*the non-fiction prose masterpiece of the nineteenth century in America*. It is a work that pioneers the new history coming into existence at the time. It offers archival research on an unprecedented scale in America, and combines it with social and intellectual history, diplomatic and military and economic history."<sup>54</sup> Considering that the 19th century produced such gifted writers of history as Irving, Prescott, and Parkman, to name only three, this is high tribute indeed. Wills persuasively concludes that 20th century American historians have misrepresented Adams' themes and analysis to such a degree that the only explanation possible is that they simply have not read him.<sup>55</sup>

The privately-printed versions of three of the four parts (12 copies of the first, and 6 copies of each of the second and third) may reside in research libraries somewhere. Or perhaps they belong to some lucky collectors. I have never seen any of them appear in an auction or bookseller's catalogue. The first trade edition of the complete nine volumes is itself now something of a rarity, perhaps in part because the books on each of the four administrations came out at different times, so some buyers no doubt acquired fewer than all of the volumes. As I write this, one complete set of the first trade edition of the nine-volume work (with an accompanying volume of *Historical Essays* published in 1891), said to be in "virtually mint" condition, is listed on AbeBooks for \$10,000. I was fortunate to find my set of these books in a second-hand book shop near the University of Chicago about 15 years ago. My recollection is that this set cost me about \$75 – but it must quickly be added that their condition is far short of "virtually mint."

With the Jefferson and Madison volumes put to bed, Henry's first thought was one of escape. By August 1890 he and La Farge were off again – this time to China. On the way they stopped at Honolulu, where Henry had an interview with the King of Hawaii. Before heading on to Samoa, he wrote Elizabeth Cameron: "You are my only strong tie to what I suppose I ought to call home. If you should go back on me, I should wholly disappear."<sup>56</sup> It was about as explicit as the proper middle-aged widower could allow himself to be with his married Washington neigh-

bor. In Samoa Henry was entertained by beautiful young dancers, naked to the waist. In Tahiti he encountered others – but was apparently untempted:

I have not yet met one who inspired me with improper desires. Fifty-three years are a decided check to sexual passion, but I do not think the years are alone to blame.... I cannot pick out one who seems to me likely, even thirty years ago, to have held me much more than five minutes even in her arms.... I have not been tempted, ...nor has La Farge.<sup>57</sup>

Henry was, however, tempted by the history of Tahiti. He soon met Queen Marau Taaroa and her family, and heard her stories of the legends and traditions of the islands. Soon he was offering to take notes and to write out her memoirs for her. He wrote to his friend Elizabeth Cameron, "I have untangled two centuries of family history, and got it wound up nicely. I have rewritten two chapters, making a very learned disquisition of Tahitian genealogy, mixed up with legends and love-songs.... [A]s it is for Marau in the first person, I have to leave out everything risky."<sup>58</sup>

Henry encouraged Marau to continue her own research and to send him the results after his return to the United States. She and her family did so, conveying the new materials via one of her relatives. The memories embodied in these materials were those of Marau's mother, Ariitaimai. Henry incorporated the new material into a revised manuscript that set forth the history of the ruling Teva clan. It was privately published in 1893 as *Memoirs of Marau Taaroa Last Queen of Tahiti*. As BAL reports, there is "no doubt" that Henry was the author. The book – done "ultissimo-privately" – was printed in Washington in an edition of not more than ten copies, most of which Henry sent off to Marau and her brother in Tahiti.

Edward Chalfant thinks there were as few as eight copies and that the edition was not a "book" – but rather "copies of proof-sheets of a work-in-progress." He believed that Henry expected to modify and recast the work and change the "voice" so that it would appear to come from Marau's mother.<sup>59</sup>

When Henry prepared the "revised edition" in Paris in 1901, he not only added to the text but also corrected the title to reflect the fact that the memoirs were really



those of Marau's mother. The new title was thus, *Memoirs of Arii Taimai, Marama of Eimeo, Teriirere of Tooarai, Teriinu of Tahiti, Tauraatua I Amo*.<sup>60</sup> Neither BAL nor Henry's biographers venture a guess as to how many copies were printed. Chalfant says only that it was "small."<sup>61</sup> My copy bears the bookplate of William L. Clements, University of Michigan.

This taste for small limited "private" editions, initiated with three parts of the Jefferson/Madison history and extended now with the Tahiti memoir, would be indulged again in the two works for which Adams is best known.

Henry returned home from Tahiti "westbound" – via Europe. He stopped in Paris to meet his neighbor Elizabeth Cameron and her children. The Senator had sent her away from America to spare her the rigors of another election season. Henry did not think much of Senator Cameron. Such people had what Henry termed "the political vice of reaching their objects without much regard to their methods." Here we have again the theme earlier expressed in *Democracy* – ends cannot justify means. Yet Henry thought that "Cameron's qualities and defects united in equal share to make him the *most useful* member of the Senate."<sup>62</sup> Immoral, but "most useful"?

Henry and Elizabeth Cameron had kept up their long-distance dalliance via extended letters. Seeing her in person in Paris was another thing altogether. He was then 53 and she 34. Divorce and affair were both impossible. After Elizabeth left to return to Washington, he wrote her a letter which laid bare his feelings:

[A]n elderly man, when hit over the head by an apocalyptic Never, does not sublime to Power... then he bolts and runs like a mad dog, anywhere – to Samoa, to Tahiti, to Fiji; then he dashes straight around the world, hoping to get to Paris ahead of the Apocalypse; ... As I am much the older and presumably the one of us two who is responsible for whatever mischief can happen, I feel as though I had led you into the mistake of bringing me here, and I am about to lead you into the worse mistake of bringing me home.... [B]ecause no matter how much I may efface myself or how little I may ask, I must always make more demand on you than you can gratify, and you must always have the

consciousness that, whatever I may profess, I want more than I can have.... I am not old enough to be a tame cat, and you are too old to accept me in any other character.... As I have learned to follow fate with docility surprising to myself, I shall come back gaily, with a heart as sick as ever a man had who knew that he should lose the only object he loved because he loved too much.<sup>63</sup>

"Not old enough to be a tame cat...."  
"A man...who knew that he should lose the only object he loved because he loved too much." Could the thought be better expressed?

This is the point at which – after the break of 20 years, including the suicide of Clover and rejection by Elizabeth Cameron – Henry's autobiography resumes. His mood was clear and his writing skills intact:

Adams would rather, as choice, have gone back to the east, if it were only to sleep forever in the trade-winds under the southern stars, wandering over the dark purple ocean, with its purple sense of solitude and void.<sup>64</sup>

But Henry could not simply disappear. With not much else to do, he could spend more time traveling. The spring and fall of 1893 found him visiting the Chicago World's Fair, where he was struck by the architecture, as well as the dynamos and steam engines. The exhibits led him to think about historical trends. If the progress of the dynamo was constant at the rate of the preceding ten years, "it would result in infinite costless energy within a generation." Where was the point toward which the history of America was driving? His education had so far failed. If he were to make another try, this time it would be to find out "what the mass of mankind did care for, and why."<sup>65</sup>

Henry's presidential statement to the American Historical Association in December 1894, later published as "The Tendency of History," reflected his renewed interest in elevating history to the status of a science – one in which forces or laws could be detected that would help explain the past and predict the future. Might Marxism provide that explanation? Or might the path of development be explained by the accumulations of capital and advancing materialism, accompanied by developments of armaments? Henry did not have the answer yet, but thought he had identified the right question.

As contrast is essential to understanding, Henry thought it would help if he could understand what the mass of mankind cared for in the past; so he was delighted when his friends the Lodges invited him to visit Normandy in the fall of 1895. The trip gave him a chance to see the cathedrals with fresh eyes, uncontaminated by his early pro-German biases. He explored Mont Saint Michel until he imagined himself a Norman.

By late 1897 he was back in Paris studying medieval French texts, seeking to "recapture the vital emotions of the dedicated Christian warriors Charlemagne and Roland." His biographer believes that a new book was beginning to take shape in his mind.<sup>66</sup> A trip to Italy in 1899 further invigorated his effort to re-imagine the 12th century. He visited Sicily, where Norman Gothic architecture had begun, and continued to work on the *chansons de geste*. From there, he moved on to Paris, spending free weekends touring the countryside and exploring every 12th century church he could find. When not inspecting churches, he was deep in the works of St. Thomas. It was a sharp contrast to what he experienced in America: "compression, concentration, and consequent development of terrific energy, represented not by souls, but by coal and iron and steam."<sup>67</sup>

During the summer of 1900 Henry was well into the draft of his new work. It happened that during this period Henry also visited the great Exposition of 1900 in Paris.

His chief interest was in new motors to make [the] air-ship feasible, and... the astonishing complexities of the new Daimler motor, and of the automobile, which, since 1893, had become a night-mare at a hundred kilometers an hour, almost as destructive as the electric tram which was only ten years older; and threatening to become as terrible as the locomotive steam-engine itself....

He also visited the great hall of dynamos. To Adams

the dynamo became a symbol of infinity. As he grew accustomed to the great gallery of machines, he began to feel the forty-foot dynamos as a moral force, much as the early Christians felt the Cross.<sup>68</sup>

Might Henry be able to do more than describe facts and trace sequences in history? Might he determine the underlying

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ing relations of cause and effect – and make sense of the “two kingdoms of force” – the 12th century kingdom of the Virgin, and the 20th century kingdom of the dynamo?

Symbol or energy, the Virgin had acted as the greatest force the western world ever felt, and had drawn man’s activities to herself more strongly than any other power, natural or supernatural, had ever done; the historian’s business was to follow the track of the energy; to find where it came from and where it went to; its complex source and shifting channels; its values, equivalents, conversions.<sup>69</sup>

By October 1900 Henry had finished in Paris an initial draft of *Mont Saint Michel and Chartres*. He continued to add to and edit the text, pausing only to complete the revised edition of the volume on the history of Tahiti in the fall of 1901. It was not until April 1902 that Henry completed editing the manuscript. At that time he wrote that he was “perfectly square with the Virgin Mary, having finished and wholly rewritten the whole volume.”<sup>70</sup>

Within a few months he began the work that would become its sequel – later known as the *Education* – the work that would do for the kingdom of the dynamo what *Mont Saint Michel* did for the kingdom of the Virgin.<sup>71</sup> But he could not refrain from further tinkering with his “great work on the Virgin” – which continued until January 1904. A week after he sent the proofs to Furst and Company, of Baltimore, a fire destroyed the Baltimore business district. A portion of the printer’s copy was lost in the fire, which further delayed publication – until December 1904.

When the work of printing and binding was complete, 100 copies of *Mont Saint Michel and Chartres*<sup>72</sup> were delivered to Adams. The pages were printed with wide margins; and the book, in quarto form, was dressed in a blue cloth binding with a leather label on the spine. As with several of his earlier books, Henry did not allow his name to appear on the title page.

At this point in his life, Henry had no



The author’s copy of Tahiti and Mont Saint Michel, the latter with Adams’ inscription to a Swarthmore professor

interest in commercial publication. He was writing for a limited audience. About 50 copies immediately went out to a select group of friends and a few university libraries. One may imagine the flurry this created. His biographer writes that the distribution “stirred a wave of delighted response, and the fortunate possessors of the precious copies could only tantalize those who were not on Adams’ list.”<sup>73</sup> The remaining copies were presumably given out to friends over the years.

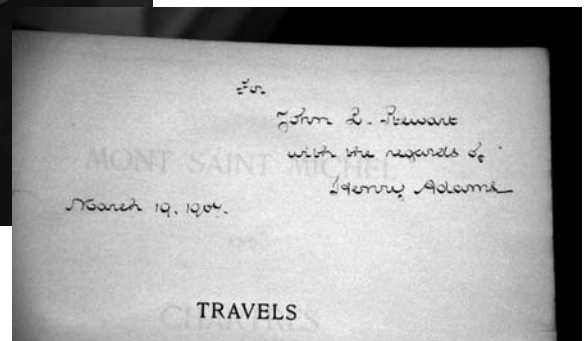
My copy was inscribed by Adams – “For John L. Stewart with the regards of Henry Adams, March 19, 1907.” Stewart was a professor at Swarthmore and a member of the History Club at the University of Pennsylvania.

Because of the demand, Adams arranged for a second edition of 500 copies, privately printed in Washington in 1912, also in folio size, with blue cloth and a leather label. My copy of this second edition is not inscribed. The first *trade* edition did not appear until 1913. When it did, it was a commercial smash. The advance sales broke all the publisher’s records, and the royalties paid

for the commissioning of a stained-glass window off one of the side aisles of Chartres cathedral.<sup>74</sup>

*Mont Saint Michel and Chartres* was primarily a work of literary imagination and spell-binding prose. Historians of the Middle Ages have had great trouble with it ever since its appearance. As Adams’ biographer explains, modern students who read of his “grand illusion” – which supposedly “united all the diversities of the Middle Ages” as well as the “art and religious imagination” of that world – or who ponder his “quasi-occult explanations of the energy of the Virgin,” must rub their eyes in wonder.<sup>75</sup>

Henry worked on the sequel – the *Education* – throughout 1905



in Europe, mostly in Paris. In December he brought back to Washington a nearly-completed manuscript. But it took him a year to complete the writing and editing. Henry made arrangements for a limited publication, similar to that of *Mont Saint Michel*, with the same publisher – Furst and Company. The date at the end of the preface was February 16, 1907, Henry’s 69th birthday.

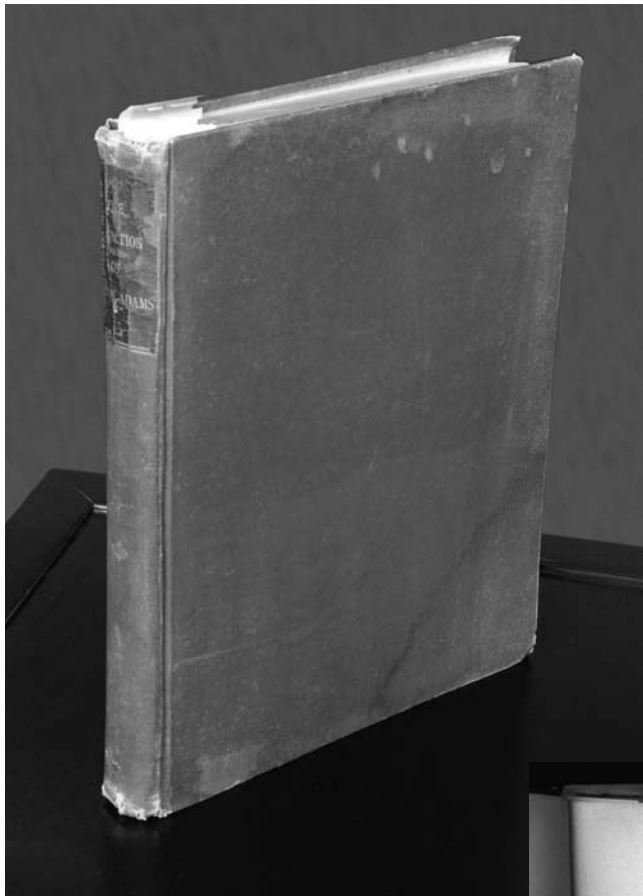
*The Education of Henry Adams*<sup>76</sup> appeared in quarto form with a dark blue cloth binding and wide-margined pages, similar in appearance to *Mont Saint Michel* and the Tahiti volume. BAL reports that at first he had only 40 copies printed, but the demand was so great that he had 60 more printed later. Henry treated the copies as bound proof-sheets and sent them to his friends – including many of those named in the narrative – and invited their corrections: “In case you object to any phrase or expression, will you please draw your pen through it, and, at the end, return me the volume.”<sup>77</sup>

All but about ten of the recipients had

the good sense to retain their volumes.<sup>78</sup> A few objected to their treatment. Senator Cameron (the husband of Henry's friend Elizabeth), whom Henry had described as one who "reasoned little and never talked," returned his copy and wrote with constrained irritation that "if what you said suits you I am content, feeling sure that you have written what you believe and one has no right to ask any more."<sup>79</sup> Henry's old friend, Henry Cabot Lodge, expressed his dissatisfaction through his wife, to whom Adams replied: "If Cabot objects, I will take out what he objects to. No wives are allowed to complain of what I've written about their husbands." Lodge was too proud to complain so the text remained unchanged.<sup>80</sup>

Most of Henry's friends were pleased with the book. Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr., though he found Adams' pessimism tiresome, wrote that "I for one have owed you more than you in the least suspect." Henry James replied, "I lost myself in your ample pages as in a sea of memories and visions and associations."<sup>81</sup> But William James found it to be "a hodge-podge of world-fact, private fact, philosophy, irony..." So much was dealt with "by hint and implication" that it was "esoteric" and "obscure." He also objected to Adams' "historical thesis."<sup>82</sup>

James was referring to Adams' concluding 33rd and 34th chapters – "A Dynamic Theory of History," and "A Theory of Acceleration," to which no summary can do justice. So here is a brief unjust one: Force is "anything that does, or helps to do work." Force attracts. The "highest attractive energy" is "Divine" – and "for its control [man] invented the science called Religion." These forces raised the dome of Sancta Sofia and the Cathedral at Amiens. Then emerged new natural forces – the compass and gun powder. Gradually the assumed unity of the universe was broken. The new forces – "chemical and mechanical" – grew in volume until they took "the place of the old religious science, substituting their



Henry Adams' own "signed" copy of the Education.

attraction for the attractions of the *Civitas Dei*..." By 1900 there had appeared a "new class of super-sensual forces." Beyond the ability of people to perceive or understand these forces, their free will is shaped and constrained by these forces.

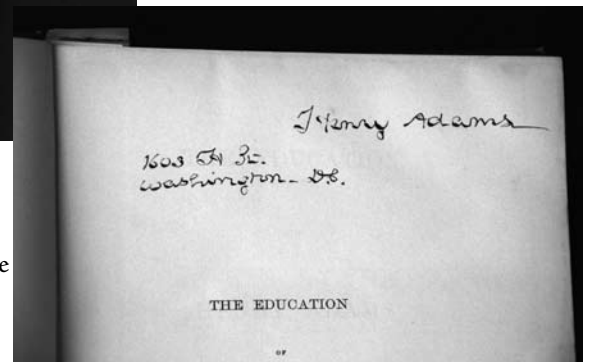
The new forces accelerate. Coal power increases. Radium awakened man to the fact "that force was inexhaustible." The power of bombs "would double in force and number every ten years." The number of minds "engaged in pursuing force" and their instruments was also rapidly increasing. "At the rate of progress since 1800, every American who lived into the year 2000 would know how to control unlimited power."<sup>83</sup> The movement "from unity into multiplicity" would continue.

As a vision of the future, Adams' closing chapters were remarkably prescient. Some other Adams observations along the same lines were even more provocative. For example, he wrote to his friend Charles Gaskell in 1903: "Science has given up the whole fabric of cause and effect. Even time-sequence is beginning to be threatened. I should not at all wonder if some one

should not upset time. As for space, it is upset already."<sup>84</sup>

But as a theory of history – one that might explain the new scientific forces and enable the historian to predict the future – Adams' great essay left much in obscurity. Perhaps if he could have lived a few years longer, into the scientific era of quantum mechanics, he might have been less optimistic that great theories of causation existed at all – let alone that observers could detect them without interfering with the very processes under observation.

My copy of *The Education of Henry Adams* is one Adams kept for himself. On the half-title page he wrote his name and address: "Henry Adams, 1603 H. St. Washington, D.C." It contains 11 handwritten annotations to the text; and on the inside of the front cover the book plate of William Holland Wilmer, who



was at one time Adams' ophthalmologist.<sup>85</sup> Dr. Wilmer lived about a block away from Adams, on 1610 I. Street. His descendants sold the book to an East-Coast book dealer, who in turn sold it to me in 1991. The tradition in the Wilmer family – as transmitted to me by the book dealer – was that one day when Adams was having tea with the Wilmers, he

asked if Dr. Wilmer had seen *The Education of Henry Adams*. When Dr. Wilmer replied in the negative, Mr. Adams removed a copy from his briefcase, saying, "I have a copy with me, and I will let you read this one." Several weeks later, Mrs. Wilmer was at tea with Mrs. Adams. [She] remarked, "I am embarrassed that Will has not returned Mr. Adams' book to him, I will speak to him about it." Mrs. Adams replied, "You musn't bring it back. My husband would be insulted. He wants Dr. Wilmer to have the copy, but it's just his way, he could never bring himself to say to Dr.

Wilmer he was giving it to him.”

The reference to the tea with Mrs. Adams shows that the story is at least partially false because by the time the *Education* appeared, Clover Adams was long dead.

Several years after I purchased Adams' copy of the *Education* (the one he gave to Dr. Wilmer), I received a note from the book dealer saying that an Adams scholar, Professor Edward Chalfant, was doing research into the printing history of the *Education*, and invited me to get in touch with him. I did so, and enjoyed a very pleasant exchange of correspondence in the spring of 1998. I was happy to provide him with copies of the half-title with Adams name and address in his handwriting, as well as the hand-written annotations to pages of the text.

Three years later Chalfant published the third volume in his trilogy of the life of Adams.<sup>86</sup> Chalfant's book reflects his extraordinarily detailed research into the number of copies printed, the ones Adams kept, and to whom he gave copies. He was able to trace and identify 42 copies of the first edition. He lists six of these as copies Adams “treated as his own.”<sup>87</sup>

Chalfant refers to the copy Adams gave Dr. Wilmer as the “Signed Copy.” He writes: “Of the few copies so far found that Adams annotated, it alone bears his signature. It fairly begs to be called the Signed Copy.”<sup>88</sup> Chalfant explains that the 11 annotations in Adams' handwriting consisted of “10 corrections and one improvement,” and believes that Adams had probably kept this copy in his downstairs library.<sup>89</sup>

Although Adams' literary life was far from over, the books that came after the *Education* were in the nature of keeping commitments and tidying up. After his friend John Hay's death in 1905, Hay's widow asked Henry to edit his letters, which appeared in three privately-printed volumes, along with portions of Hay's diary, as *Letters of John Hay and Extracts from Diary*.<sup>90</sup> Henry devoted hundreds of hours of work to the project, so he was shocked when he saw that Mrs. Hay had reduced virtually all the names of people and places to initials – thus depriving the work of most of its interest and utility.

Henry spent more time in Paris, enjoy-

ing the company of Bernard Berenson and Edith Wharton. A minor stroke in the summer of 1908 did not prevent him from continuing to grope for concepts and measures that would flesh out his law of acceleration. Some of these ideas worked their way into his essay, “The Rule of Phase Applied to History.” Other ideas – including the theory of entropy (the dissipation of energy) – were embodied in *A Letter to American Teachers of History*,<sup>91</sup> which Henry arranged to be printed privately in February 1910 and sent off to his friends in the world of academia.<sup>92</sup> About half of these were signed; the others were not, although many were given by Adams to historians and friends. Mine is one of the unsigned ones; Henry gave it to Alice Parker Hoyt, the artist/daughter-in-law of Theodore Roosevelt's Attorney General. In his *Letter*, Henry again sought to identify and measure the forces of cause and effect that explain the past and provide a basis for predicting the future. The problem, of course, was that there was no reason to believe that the “laws” that govern particles in the world of physics are applicable in the world of human affairs.

In 1910 Henry worked up a short biographical volume about another deceased friend – this time the poet and son of his old acquaintance Henry Cabot Lodge. *The Life of George Cabot Lodge*<sup>93</sup> appeared the next year. It was a work of friendship rather than literature.

Henry suffered a major stroke in 1912. Not long after, he reconsidered his decision to limit the distribution of his two great works, *Mont Saint Michel* and the *Education*, to his friends. In 1913 he allowed the former to be published by the American Institute of Architects.<sup>94</sup> About the same time, his brother Charles urged him to allow the *Education* also to be made available to a larger audience. Henry discussed the possibility of posthumous publication with Lodge, and the word got back to the commercial publisher of *Mont Saint Michel*, who wrote to Henry urging that he be given the chance to publish the *Education* as well. Henry put everyone off until 1916 when he sent an annotated copy to Lodge, to be used by the Massachusetts Historical Society (MHS) in preparing the trade edition.

Adams celebrated his 80th birthday on February 16, 1918, a few months after the American entry into the First World War.

He wrote that day to an old friend grumbling about the “new world which is more wild and madder by far than the old one.”<sup>95</sup> A few weeks later he died peacefully in his sleep, March 27, 1918.

Lodge and others at the MHS used Henry's annotated copy – together with the more-heavily annotated copy in the possession of W.R. Thayer<sup>96</sup> – to prepare the commercial edition that appeared in September 1918. Within six months, it had sold 12,000 copies, and it was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1919.<sup>97</sup>

Perhaps because Adams wrote primarily for his friends, he may have been more candid and sharp-edged than he would otherwise have been – more open about his own pessimistic view of life and the perceived shortcomings in his own education. He expressed himself in paragraphs that sparkled with wit and provocative insights. If his search for the laws of history ultimately failed, the reader still takes pleasure in following him in the search.

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*Photograph of Henry Adams (page 1) ©2008, Corbis. All other photographs are of books in the author's collection, photographed by Robert McCamant.*

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Washington, 1907

<sup>2</sup> From the Modern Library Web site, “100 Best Nonfiction,” <http://www.randomhouse.com/modernlibrary/100bestnonfiction.html>

<sup>3</sup> The sources on Henry Adams and his writings are extraordinarily rich. One begins, of course, with his own book, *The Education of Henry Adams*. An outstanding modern biography is Ernest Samuels' three volumes: *The Young Henry Adams* (1948), *Henry Adams: The Middle Years* (1958), and *Henry Adams: The Major Phase* (1964). These have been condensed into a single volume, entitled simply *Henry Adams* (1989). Samuels also edited Adams' letters, published in six volumes by Harvard University Press. A more idiosyncratic but very interesting three-volume biography is by Edward Chalfant: *Both Sides of the Ocean: A Biography of Henry Adams, His First Life, 1838-1862* (1982), *Better in Darkness: A Biography of Henry Adams, His Second Life, 1862-1892* (1994), and *Improvement of the World, A Biography of Henry Adams, His Last Life, 1891-1918* (2001). Chalfant was more interested than Samuels in the publication of Adams' limited private editions, so it is a valuable source for book collectors.

A highly readable book on Adams, his wife, and circle of friends is Patricia O'Toole's *The Five of Hearts* (1990). Another fine work, on Adams as a historian, is Gary Wills' recent *Henry Adams and the Making of America* (2005).

- <sup>4</sup> *Education*, American Library edition, p. 724.  
<sup>5</sup> Samuels, *Henry Adams*, p. 8.  
<sup>6</sup> *Education*, p. 748  
<sup>7</sup> *Id.*, p. 752.  
<sup>8</sup> *Id.*, p. 769.  
<sup>9</sup> *Id.*, p. 729.  
<sup>10</sup> Samuels, p. 10  
<sup>11</sup> *Education*, p. 751.  
<sup>12</sup> *Id.*, p. 770.  
<sup>13</sup> *Id.*, p. 754.  
<sup>14</sup> Samuels, p. 22.  
<sup>15</sup> *Education.*, p. 782-83.  
<sup>16</sup> *Id.*, p. 793.  
<sup>17</sup> *Id.*, p. 802.  
<sup>18</sup> Samuels, p. 55.  
<sup>19</sup> *Id.*, p. 61.  
<sup>20</sup> *Education*, p. 853-54.  
<sup>21</sup> Samuels, p. 70.  
<sup>22</sup> *Education*, p. 957.  
<sup>23</sup> *Id.*, p. 985.  
<sup>24</sup> *Id.*, p. 987.  
<sup>25</sup> *Id.*, p. 988.  
<sup>26</sup> *Id.*, p. 994.  
<sup>27</sup> *Id.*, p. 1004.  
<sup>28</sup> Quoted in Samuels, p. 99.  
<sup>29</sup> Boston 1871  
<sup>30</sup> Quoted in Samuels, p. 114; emphasis supplied.  
<sup>31</sup> Quoted in Samuels, p. 123-24.  
<sup>32</sup> O'Toole, p. 68.  
<sup>33</sup> Samuels, p. 140-141.  
<sup>34</sup> *Id.*, p. 141-142.  
<sup>35</sup> *Democracy*, American Library edition, p. 7-13.  
<sup>36</sup> *Id.*, p. 178.  
<sup>37</sup> Samuels, p. 144-147.  
<sup>38</sup> *Id.*, p. 148.  
<sup>39</sup> Quoted in Samuels, p. 156.  
<sup>40</sup> *Id.*, p. 181.  
<sup>41</sup> Quoted in Samuels, p. 183.  
<sup>42</sup> *Id.*, p. 184.  
<sup>43</sup> *Esther*, American Library Edition, p. 329.  
<sup>44</sup> Samuels, p. 191.  
<sup>45</sup> *Id.*, p. 198.  
<sup>46</sup> *Id.*, p. 201.  
<sup>47</sup> Quoted in Samuels, p. 204.  
<sup>48</sup> *Id.*, p. 195.  
<sup>49</sup> *Id.*, p. 229.  
<sup>50</sup> *Education*, p. 1019.  
<sup>51</sup> Samuels, p. 276.  
<sup>52</sup> *Id.*, p. 231-33.
- <sup>53</sup> *Id.*, p. 281.  
<sup>54</sup> Wills, *Henry Adams and the Making of America*, p. 2 (2005), emphasis supplied.  
<sup>55</sup> *Id.*, p. 2-5.  
<sup>56</sup> Samuels, p. 242.  
<sup>57</sup> *Id.*, p. 246-247.  
<sup>58</sup> *Id.*, 259.  
<sup>59</sup> Chalfant, *Henry Adams, His Last Life, 1891-1918*, New Haven, 2001, p. 55-56.  
<sup>60</sup> Paris, 1901.  
<sup>61</sup> *Id.*, at 186.  
<sup>62</sup> *Education*, p. 1026; emphasis supplied.  
<sup>63</sup> Quoted, Samuels, p. 269-70.  
<sup>64</sup> *Education* at 1009.  
<sup>65</sup> *Id.*, p. 1033-5, 1042.  
<sup>66</sup> Samuels, p. 320.  
<sup>67</sup> Letter to Gaskell, quoted in Samuels, p. 337.  
<sup>68</sup> *Education*, p. 1066-1067.  
<sup>69</sup> *Id.*, p. 1075.  
<sup>70</sup> Samuels, p. 351.  
<sup>71</sup> *Id.*, p. 352.  
<sup>72</sup> Washington, 1904  
<sup>73</sup> Samuels, p. 366-67.  
<sup>74</sup> *Id.*, p. 440.  
<sup>75</sup> *Id.*, p. 358.  
<sup>76</sup> Washington, 1907.  
<sup>77</sup> Samuels, p. 379.  
<sup>78</sup> Chalfant, *Biography of Henry Adams* (Vol. III, p. 658)  
<sup>79</sup> Samuels, p. 380.  
<sup>80</sup> *Id.*, p. 381-81.  
<sup>81</sup> *Id.*, p. 382.  
<sup>82</sup> *Id.*, p. 385.  
<sup>83</sup> *Education*, p. 1174.  
<sup>84</sup> Quoted in Samuels, p. 371.  
<sup>85</sup> Chalfant, *Henry Adams*, Vol. III, p. 499.  
<sup>86</sup> *Improvement of the World, A Biography of Henry Adams, His Last Life, 1891-1918*, Connecticut, 2001.  
<sup>87</sup> *Id.*, p. 655.  
<sup>88</sup> *Id.*, p. 503-04, 656.  
<sup>89</sup> Though only one copy [1] bore Henry's signed name and address, he treated five other copies as his own. He made annotations and corrections in one of these [2], which he loaned to William Roscoe Thayer for use in preparing his biography of John Hay. Thayer kept it. (Chalfant calls it the "First Traveling Copy.") Chalfant himself owns what he calls [3] the "Second Traveling Copy," which was part of Adams' Paris library.

Chalfant shows that Adams had also kept [4] a "Master Copy" in which he made a more complete set of changes, probably with a view to future general publication. But Adams suffered a stroke in 1912, and Chalfant thinks that might have caused him to forget about the "Master Copy," which was hidden in a trunk containing his deceased wife Clover's belongings. Or perhaps he only forgot where he had placed it. (*Id.*, p. 492, 496.) Adams and one of his nieces, Aileen Tone, discovered it sometime around November 1917, and soon after that Adams gave the copy to Aileen. (*Id.*, p. 512, 515.) She later became engaged to a young Italian named Egisto Fabbri and took the Master Copy to Italy with her. When the marriage was called off, she left the copy in his library in Italy. Years later Chalfant tried to locate this copy but was unsuccessful. He lists it as "irretrievably lost." (*Id.*, p. 656.)

Still another copy [5] – with only a few of the corrections – Adams gave to Senator Lodge so that it might be used by the Massachusetts Historical Society (MHS) for posthumous publication. (*Id.*, p. 501.) (Chalfant calls it the "Substitute Copy." (*Id.*, p. 503.)) These corrections, plus others made in the copy loaned by Adams to Thayer [2] (*id.*, p. 464) found their way into the final commercially-published version. The "Substitute Copy" is at the Abernethy Library at Middlebury College; the copy loaned to Thayer now resides in the Massachusetts Historical Society. (See also the "Note on the Texts" appearing at the end of the Library of America edition of the *Education*.) Adams gave the final copy [6], which was unmarked ("Attendant Clean Copy") to his niece, Aileen Tone. (*Id.*, p. 512, 656.)

- <sup>90</sup> New York, 1908.  
<sup>91</sup> Washington, 1910.  
<sup>92</sup> Samuels, p. 418.  
<sup>93</sup> Boston, 1911  
<sup>94</sup> Samuels, p. 439.  
<sup>95</sup> *Id.*, p. 459.  
<sup>96</sup> *Supra* at footnote 89.  
<sup>97</sup> Samuels, p. 454.

## Club Notes

### Membership Report, March 2008

1. Newly elected members

**Robert Boyle** received his adult library card at age 10 when he convinced the head of the Saginaw, Michigan, Public Library that he had read every book in the children's collection. Now a retired educator (after a career at New Trier High School, Northwestern, the Newberry, and St. Gregory High School), a recent move necessitated serious downsizing of his collection. His current holdings include books by and about Yeats and Joyce, some first

editions, art ranging from Mapplethorpe to facsimiles of illuminated manuscripts, and many Folio Society editions. Nominated by Bob McCamant, seconded by Skip Landt

**Mike Bullington** has a long-time interest in 19th century Americana, especially Mark Twain. One of his nominators refers to him as in the tradition of a "gentleman and a scholar." His career as a corporate archivist has included positions at Kraft Foods and the Rush Medical Center; he is currently head archivist for the McDonalds Corporation. Nominated by Bernice Gallagher, seconded by Stuart Campbell.

2. The Caxton Club is having another

excellent membership year; the additions above bring our total to seventeen new Caxtonians in 2007-2008. But we remain short of our goal of twenty-five by June, and additional nominations would be welcomed. If you met possible candidates at the April Symposium, consider inviting them to a luncheon or dinner meeting. You may issue the invitation yourself or pass names along to Margaret Oellrich or me. With one additional meeting, those individuals will qualify for membership. Thanks for your assistance!

*Dan "Skip" Landt, Membership Chair,*  
*skiplandt@sbcglobal.net, 773-604-4115.*

# Book and manuscript-related exhibitions: a selective list

Compiled by Bernice E. Gallagher

(Note: on occasion an exhibit may be delayed or extended; it is always wise to call in advance of a visit)

“Imaginary Coordinates” (explores issues of national identity, borders, and the critical disparity between maps and experience by juxtaposing antique, modern and contemporary maps of the Holy Land) at the Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies, 610 South Michigan, Chicago 312-322-1700 (May 2 to September 7, 2008).

“Mapping Mars” (compares today’s images of the red planet with sixteenth century diagrams charting the motions of Mars and nineteenth century maps depicting Martian canals) at the Adler Planetarium and Astronomy Museum, 1300 South Lake Shore Drive, Chicago 312-922-STAR (extended through May 18, 2008).



“The Language of Flowers”

(charming examples of illustrated books displaying the Victorian fascination with floral symbolism and the language of flowers) in the Lenhardt Library at the Chicago Botanic Garden, 1000 Lake Cook Road, Glencoe 847-835-8202 (closes May 18, 2008).

“Temple of Flora” (published in England between 1799 and 1807 and considered the single most famous of all florilegia, this exceedingly rare book and a host of others written by London physician Robert John Thornton are prized for their beautifully crafted and highly romantic illustrations) in the Lenhardt Library at the Chicago Botanic Garden, 1000 Lake Cook Road, Glencoe 847-835-8202 (May 23 to August 17, 2008).

“Exploration 2008: The Chicago Calligraphy Collective’s Annual Juried Exhibition” (promoting the study, practice, and appreciation of calligraphy in all its historical and present day applications, exhibit includes handmade artists’ books and broadsides as well as three-dimensional works executed in various media and styles, from classical to contemporary) in the Herman Dunlap Smith Gallery at the Newberry Library, 60 West Walton Street, Chicago 312-255-3700 (May 28 to July 11, 2008).

“Ed Ruscha and Photography” (on loan from the Whitney Museum of American Art, an exhibit of Ruscha’s signature photographic books as well as approximately 115 original photographic prints, many of which have never before been seen or published) at the Art Institute of Chicago, 111 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago 312-443-3600 (closes June 1, 2008).

“Improvisations: Picture Books by Chris Raschka” (picture-book art that highlights American musicians, poets and storytellers,

including early dummy books showing the development of images prior to their final form) in Galleries 15 and 16 at the Art Institute of Chicago, 111 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago 312-443-3600 (closes June 8, 2008).

“Life Turns on Two Wheels” (explores the development of two-wheel vehicles, from chariots to Segways, including books, posters, late nineteenth/early twentieth century bicycle maps, Africana) in the main exhibit space at the Northwestern University Library, 1970 Campus Drive, Evanston 847-467-5918 (closes June 26, 2008).

“Images of Jewish Prayer, Politics, and Everyday Life from the Branka and Harry Sondheim Jewish Heritage Collection” (includes books, prints and works of art that focus on visual representa-

Chris Raschka at the Art Institute

ILLUSTRATION FROM *BE BOY BUZZ* BY BELL HOOKS, HYPERION

Imaginary Coordinates at the Spertus Institute

MICHAL ROVNER, *DECOY #29 B*, DETAIL, 1991, PACE WILDENSTEIN GALLERY, NYC



tions of Jewish life, including works by artists Alphonse Levy, Moritz Oppenheim and Arthur Szyk) in the Main Gallery at the Special Collections Research Center, Joseph Regenstein Library, University of Chicago, 1100 East 57th Street, Chicago 773-702-8705 (closes July 6, 2008).

“From Prairie to Field: Photographs by Terry Evans” (internationally exhibited photographer presents exquisite photographs, beautifully printed and using state-of-the-art Iris technology, documenting the variety of prairie life that comprises the Field

Museum’s scientific collection) at the Field Museum Library, 1400 South Lake Shore Drive, Chicago 312-665-7892 (closes July 27).

“Graphic Thought Facility: Resourceful Design” (the first exhibition at the Art Institute devoted solely to the work of a single design firm, including GTF book designs for monographs on the work of Tord Boonjte and Ron Arad as well as catalogues for the 54th Carnegie International Exhibition, the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Institute of Contemporary Art in London, the Tate Britain and Tate Modern retail stores) in Gallery 24 at the Art Institute of Chicago, 111 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago 312-443-3600 (closes August 17, 2008).

“The Fanciful and Fascinating Insect World” (includes artwork and rare books from the Morton Arboretum’s library and illustrates how insects have fueled the human imagination) in the Sterling Morton Library at the Morton Arboretum, 4100 Illinois Route 53, Lisle 630-719-2430 (closes August 25, 2008).

“Priests for Peace: The Nonviolent Roots of 1968 Protests” (includes items from the collection of Daniel Berrigan – Jesuit priest, social activist, author of nonfiction and poetry—and features works annotated by Berrigan while in prison as well as copies of works by Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hahn) in Special Collections and Archives, Room 314, at DePaul University’s John T. Richardson Library, 2350 N. Kenmore Avenue, Chicago 773-325-2167 (closes November 1, 2008).

Bernice Gallagher will be happy to receive your listings at either 847-234-5255 or [gallagher@lakeforest.edu](mailto:gallagher@lakeforest.edu).

# Caxtonians Collect: Ed Colker

Forty-first in a series of interviews with members

Interviewed by Robert McCamant

When asked what he collects, Ed Colker often answers: "I collect encounters with artists, printers, and poets." That's because Ed, though a member of two clubs of book collectors (Caxton and Grolier), is more a book maker than he is a book collector. In 40-odd productions since the 1960s, he has continued the traditions of the French *livres d'artistes*, making portfolios and books that combine words with his own (and occasionally others') images.

The amazing thing is that he has managed to do his own art while conducting two successful careers as art-school director and college administrator. He crossed paths with the Caxton Club when he was Director of the School of Art and Design and Research Professor of Art at the University of Illinois at Chicago during 1972-1980; he joined the Club in 1979. Ed remembers Frank

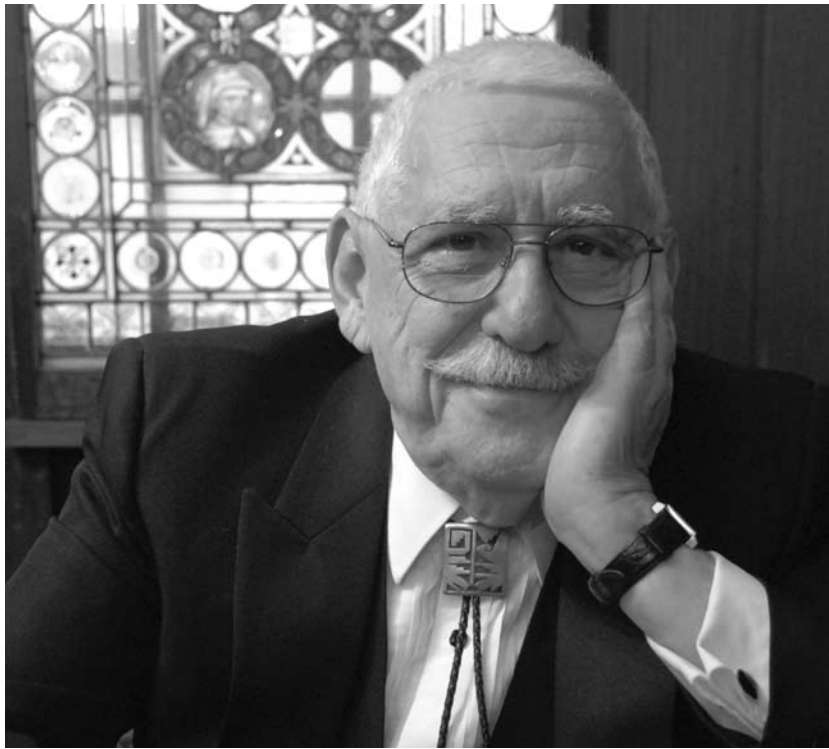
Williams (then running the University of Illinois Press' Chicago arm) as having recruited him. He also got involved with the Society of Typographic Arts, and came to know Bob Middleton and Hayward Blake through both organizations.

"Chicago was a wonderful environment in those days," Colker says. "The typographers were talking to the printers, and the artists were talking to the poets. You'd find half a dozen ways to solve a problem consulting your friends."

Colker came from Philadelphia. "My father was a paper merchant. Our house was always full of books – both books to read and paper sample books – I still love paper samples. My childhood was spent playing ball in the streets and coming home to books." He points out that his mother ran a book club in her nursing home into her nineties.

After high school, he won a scholarship to the then Philadelphia Museum School

of Industrial Art, where he studied graphic design. But World War II intervened, and he served with the infantry in Italy. He was discharged in 1946, and returned to the same school under the GI bill, studying etching and lithography. When he graduated in 1949, he joined the Drawing faculty.



In 1956 he moved to New York, and in 1960 was printing etchings for Edward Hopper.

Also in 1960, he saw "The Artist and the Book 1860-1960" exhibition at Harvard and the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. Nothing was ever the same after seeing that display and its catalog. He applied for, and received, a Guggenheim Fellowship to work in France. In Paris, at the Bibliothèque Nationale he examined many of the finest *livres d'artistes*, and met Georges Le Blanc. He met, and for a period of more than 10 years, collaborated with lithographer Desjobert in Paris. In Barcelona, he visited Jaume Pla, Picasso's printer in Majorca. He traveled to Alès to meet Pierre A. Benoit (who styled himself PAB), where he was shown a magnificent *Odes of Pindar* with art by Picasso and works by Dubuffet, Braque and others. Meeting PAB, he came to the realization that "one person could do the entire piece: assemble words and artwork and produce a finished, elegant

work on paper." He has been creating books and portfolios of his own ever since.

But he did not find that creating limited editions paid very well. So he went back to school, specifically to NYU, for another degree [and eventually a third] so that he was credentialed for college administrative duties. He worked first at the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Fine Arts. His Chicago position was next. From there he went to the State University of New York at Purchase, where he was instrumental (with Antonio Frascioni) in the development of its Center for Edition Works. After a brief stint at Cornell, he returned to Philadelphia where he was the founding Provost for the new University of the Arts, which subsumed his old alma mater, the Museum School, and several other institutions. There he initiated, with the help of a trustee, the Borowsky Center for Publication

Arts and developed a graduate program in Book Arts. He ended his administrative career with Provost positions at Cooper Union and Pratt Institute.

Chicago was also an important connection for the writers he has worked with in his books. He mentioned two in particular:

– Kathleen Norris (who was actually from South Dakota, but whom he met in Chicago), with whom he collaborated on the 1993 *All Souls*, a group of her poems, with his lithographs of Dakota landscapes. "We were talking about doing a book, and she practically ordered me to come out and see the Dakotas for myself. She was right: the sky there is like no place else." He went on to do *The Astronomy of Love* (1994) and *Three Poems* (2001) with Norris.

– Michael Anania, who had been poetry editor of *The Swallow Press*. In Colker's checklist I count six collaborations with Anania from 1977 through 2004.

See ED COLKER, page 16

CAXTONIAN, MAY 2008

photograph by Robert McCamant

# Bookmarks...

## Luncheon Program

Friday May 9, 2008, Women's Athletic Club

Jack Weiner

"An Extraordinary Bibliophile, Art Collector and Philanthropist Uncovered"

From the moment Caxtonian Jack Weiner saw the bookplate in the Newberry's copy of *Don Quixote* (one of only 8 first editions, 1605 and 1615), he *knew* he had to find out about **Oscar Benjamin Cintas**. And so begins Jack's relentless no-stones-unturned research on a person subsequently revealed to be a brilliant, multi-millionaire Cuban bibliophile and philanthropist with an art collection said to rival those of Morgan, Mellon and Frick and, later, a creator of a foundation similar to the MacArthur Foundation.

Jack is an author (6 books), Scholar-in-Residence at the Newberry, and Professor (Emeritus) of Spanish Literature, Language and Culture at NIU. His illustrated talk will include the difficulties Mr. Cintas had in wanting to turn his Havana residence into an art museum, the whereabouts of his extensive library, and the amazing results of his adoration of Abraham Lincoln.

Why is this fascinating, noteworthy person so little known? Come and find out.

*The May luncheon meeting will take place at the Women's Athletic Club, 626 N. Michigan Avenue. (Enter on Ontario; go to the 4th floor.)*

*Luncheon buffet opens at 11:30; program 12:30-1:30. Luncheon is \$29.*

*The May dinner meeting will take place at Petterino's Restaurant, 150 N. Dearborn (NW corner Randolph and Dearborn. Enter on Randolph at the corner). Dinner timing: spirits at 5 pm, dinner at 6 pm, program*

## Dinner Program

Wednesday, May 21, 2008, Petterino's Restaurant

Heidi Ardizzone

"An Illuminated Life: Belle da Costa Greene"

The *Chicago Tribune* wrote in 1912, "She knows more about rare books than any other American. She has spent \$42,000 for a single volume and outwitted a rich duke at an auction. Her opinion on Caxton editions is sought by the greatest scholars. She is chic, vivacious, and interesting. She wears her hair long and does not use glasses, runs to Europe on secret missions, and is the terror of continental collectors' agents. Her name is Belle Greene." She was also J. P. Morgan's librarian (he called her "the cleverest girl I know") and for twenty five years directed the library that bears his name. Join us as Belle Greene's biographer reviews for us the life and work of this remarkable bookwoman, who simultaneously pushed the boundaries of womanhood and race.

Dr. Ardizzone teaches American Studies at the University of Notre Dame. Copies of her new biography of Belle da Costa Greene will be available for purchase at the meeting.

*at 7:30 pm. Price for dinner is \$48. For reservations call 312-255-3710 or email [caxtonclub@newberry.org](mailto:caxtonclub@newberry.org); **reservations are needed by noon Wednesday for the Friday Luncheon, and by noon Monday for the Wednesday dinner.** See [www.caxtonclub.org](http://www.caxtonclub.org) for parking and transit information.*

## Beyond May...

### JUNE LUNCHEON

On June 13th Hayward Blake, Honorary Caxtonian and Past President, will be interviewed by Past President Junie Sinson. Topics will include Hayward's early life, his participation in the Normandy Invasion and his career as a graphic designer.

### JUNE DINNER

On June 18th, our final meeting of the season will take place at the Fortnightly Club. Nonresident Caxtonian Michele Cloonan (of Simmons College, Boston) will explore Alice Millard: Chicagoan, socialite, and bookseller.

ED COLKER, *from page 15*

When I asked Colker why he remains a Caxtonian even though living in so many other cities, he turned sentimental. "The Chicago years were among the most productive in my life. And I kept up friendships with so many Caxtonians. Beverly Lynch, Bob Adelsperger, Gretchen Lagana, more recently Alice Schreyer, the STA people I mentioned earlier, and others. You can't turn your back on all those wonderful

colleagues."

In 1985, Colker was interviewed by Irving Sandler in conjunction with an exhibit of his work. What he said then seems to sum up his view: "Book arts, book objects, the arts of the book of today, have moved into other areas, about which I have some mixed feelings. But the tradition that I follow is total respect for the text.... Both poem and artwork exist on their own and are not treated in any hierarchical fashion.... We're

not depicting, we're not making a picture for the reader.... The power of poetry can 'evoke primal states of awareness' without picturing them. I think the visual artist is also seeking to awaken and reveal such awareness."

Colker believes Monroe Wheeler said it best in *Modern Painters and Sculptors as Illustrators*: author and artist, "inspired by similar feeling" striving for "spiritual unity."

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