

Even allowing for an aggressive inflation rate, orders placed at the original time of purchase would have come out smelling sweet. With fewer than 10 copies available, the question hasn't been the book's price but who will be given the opportunity to purchase one.

## THE ROYAL PICK

### *Shakespeare "fairly honest"*

SINCE THE LAST column, one of the highlights of the auction year was the sale of a First Folio of William Shakespeare in early July. Sotheby's in London sold this "fairly honest copy" (which I presume means fewer facsimiles have been added to make it complete than other copies around) of the First Folio for £2,500,000 plus the buyer's premium. The buyer was Simon Finch Rare Books, and the word in the business and around the auction circuit is that this was a very good buy and Sotheby's may have been disappointed with the absence of many of the big bidders. Simon Finch has been quoted as saying "that the likelihood of another relatively honest copy coming up for sale in the next 10 to 15 years is small. The Berland copy, which we consider inferior, brought \$6,166,000 shortly after one the most cataclysmic events in modern history. It is a personal view that varies from one nationality to another, but the First Folio is certainly in our top five wish list of rare books." Of course, when another copy comes on the market, I will be here to comment on its sale.

Ulysses of London, catalogue #101, had a wonderful small collection of signed Edward Ardizzone material. This illustrator is very collectible. One unusual item that caught my eye was *The Fantastic Tale of the Plucky Sailor and the Postage Stamp* by Stephen Corrin, Faber, 1954, first edition with pictorial boards with the original dust wrapper at £225. This is a very short story, 20 pages, and quite a scarce item. They also had some original signed Christmas cards at £125. A favourite of many collectors is T. S. Eliot, and in the small collection offered for sale is a first edition *Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats*, Faber, 1939, at £975, containing 14 poems. Originally it was intended to have as many poems about dogs as about cats, but only two of the former got written, so that aspect of the book was abandoned. I couldn't leave this catalogue without a mention of one of my favourite authors, T. E. Lawrence, and they have a very good first edition of *Oriental Assembly*, Williams & Norgate, 1939,

at £160; at the rear of this volume are about 100 photographs, mostly unpublished, by the author. Ulysses always produces a wonderful and varied catalogue.

William Reese of New Haven, CT, catalogue #249, *Early American Law and Legal Thought*, had a few items concerning Canada. There was a 24-volume run of the *Journal of the House of Assembly, Lower Canada, Quebec 1793-1817* in overall very good condition, printed in alternating English and French, at US\$7,500. Also a two-volume set bound in one volume of *The Provincial Statutes of Lower Canada...*, Quebec 1798-1830, printed in alternating English and French, at US\$1,250. Also *The Quebec Gazette*, Thursday, December 1, 1791...*La Gazette de Quebec*, Jeudi, 1 Decembre, 1791..., Quebec: Printed by Samuel Neilson, 1791, 12 pages folio, bound. This is the first and official Canadian printing of the *Constitutional Act of 1791*, by which Canada received representative government, Upper and Lower Canada were divided into two separate entities, and the rights of the French inhabitants of Quebec were confirmed. Very rare and priced at US\$15,000.

Henry Sotheran Limited's catalogue of children's and illustrated books had so many fine and beautiful items for sale it was hard to pick just a couple to highlight. This company was founded in York in 1761 and was established in London in 1815. On offer was *Sinbad the Sailor & Other Stories from The Arabian Nights*, illustrated by Edmund Dulac, Hodder & Stoughton, 1914, an exceptional copy in near-fine condition with 23 fine coloured plates, first edition deluxe, limited to 500 numbered copies, signed by Dulac, at £2,850. Also a first edition of *The Golliwogg's Desert Island*, by Bertha Upton and illustrated by Florence K. Upton, Longmans, Green & Co.,

## EXHIBITIONS

Seattle booksellers Wessel & Lieberman will be hosting an exhibition of works by Vancouver artist Shinsuke Minegishi (November-December 2006), including his most recent book and suite of prints *The Tale of Three Black Boxes*. As part of the exhibition, the shop will be publishing a short essay by the artist, printed letterpress and limited to 100 signed and numbered copies. The first 25 will include a tipped-in engraving printed by the artist (the remaining copies feature the image printed in facsimile). See [www.wlbooks.com](http://www.wlbooks.com) for details.



London, 1906, 31 wonderful colour-lithographed plates; a near-fine copy at £550.

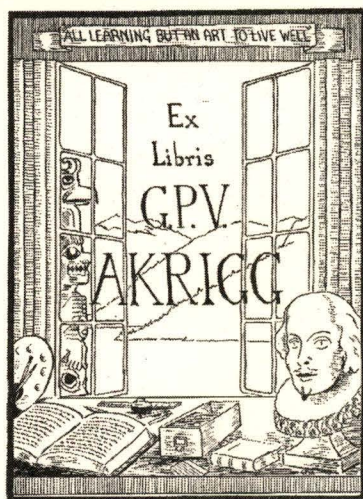
For collectors of maps, the foremost map dealer in my view is Jonathan Potter Antique Maps, in London. His 2006 catalogue contains a wide selection of world antique maps. How about *Nova Totius Terrarum Orbis Geographica Ac Hydrographica Tabula*, copperplate by G. Blaeu, Amsterdam, 1630–35, original colour and one of the most famous and sought-after of all maps, 54 x 40.5 cm. This map gives an up-to-date account of cartographical knowledge at the commencement of the 17th century and the engraving, by Josua Van Den Ende, is renowned for the surrounding border decoration. Elaborate pictorial panels at each side depict allegorical illustrations of the four elements and the four seasons. Along the top, seven classical gods are shown, and below, the seven wonders of the ancient world, with French text to verso. Priced at £12,500. What also caught my eye was a map of *London and Westminster with the Country About...*, by J. Rocque, London, 1746–48, copperplate, uncoloured, a magnificent large detailed map (259 x 190 cm) of London and 10 miles around. This map, printed on 16 sheets, has been joined and mounted on modern canvas with rollers, at £8,500.

Schumann Antiquariat, Zurich, catalogue #594, *La Divine Comedie. L'Enfer: La Purgatoire: Le Paradis*, by Dante Alighieri, illustrated by Salvador Dali, Les Heures Claires, Paris, 1963. Six volumes with 100 coloured full-page illustrations by Dali, executed in wood engravings by Raymond Jacquet. Loose sheets as issued, large quarto, all in matching slipcases. One of 3,900 copies printed on Velin de Rives, a lavish production which was 55 months in the making, in all 3,100 wood engravings were necessary to reproduce Dali's 100 watercolours in such authentic quality. Priced at 8,800 Swiss francs.

In comparison, Maggs Bros.' catalogue #1391 has *Divina Commedia by Il Dante, Jean de Tournes, Lyon 1547*. One volume bound in three, 12 mo, 18th-century vellum with morocco labels and blue edges. This is the first non-counterfeit French edition and the first outside of Italy, at £2,200. They also have a wonderful manuscript *Notary's Record Book* from Italy dated 1428; 92 leaves written in a small generally legible cursive hand, in a contemporary limp vellum binding preserved in a cloth box. This is the daily notebook of notary Peregrino de Matteo from the small town of Spilimbergo and gives a fascinating insight into the daily work of a notary and shows his method of working.

JOHN KING

## EX LIBRIS



HERE IS A superb example of a bookplate that is linked both through its pictorial representations and through its provenance to the historical landscape of British Columbia. In this bookplate, British Columbia, with its natural beauty, is clearly portrayed as a source of inspiration. This is signified by the open book lying before a window through which one can view a totem pole and mountains, both typical symbols of British Columbia. Thus, literary scholarship and nature are joined together as the foundation of erudition and knowledge.

This is perhaps a view that is emblematic of the creator of the bookplate himself. The creator and originator of the bookplate was George Philip Vernon Akrigg. Born in 1939, Akrigg was a prolific British Columbian writer who, along with his wife Helen Akrigg, recorded much of British Columbia's history. Their works include *British Columbia Chronicle, 1778–1846: Adventures by Sea and Land*; *British Columbia Chronicle, 1847–1871: Gold and Colonists*; *H.M.S. Virago in the Pacific, 1851–1855: to the Queen Charlottes and Beyond*; and *British Columbia Place Names*. Akrigg's love of learning was also demonstrated by his professional career. From 1941 until 1978, he was a professor in the English Department of UBC, actively committed to encouraging literary scholarship in the lives of others. Until his death in 2001, he continued to research British Columbia's past. This bookplate stands as a testimony to the significance of Akrigg himself to the history of British Columbia and also to his efforts to keep British Columbia's past alive.

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