

THE ROYAL PICK

Fall finds on the scepter'd isle

In the fall of 2006 I was in England, where I attended four book auctions and the Chelsea Book Fair in London. In addition to the catalogues I usually receive, I managed to pick up a few others and here are my current picks.

In South Cerney, near Cirencester, Dominic Winter Book Auctions' "Collectors Sale" in November was well attended. In addition to some great books, the sale included ephemeral items and even models of airplanes! One in particular that I was seriously interested in was a very large flying scale model of a Bristol Boxkite Phoenix Flyer, nearly eight feet long and with a seven-foot wingspan. If I had been successful I had no idea how to get it to Canada, but in the end I dropped out of the bidding way before it ended at £3,200. Only later did I discover I was bidding against a well-known movie director who lives in New Zealand! But back to books.

Bloomsbury Auctions, 24 Maddox Street, London: their sale #591 had 850 lots, including *Choirbook*, 41 loose folios from a large liturgical manuscript on vellum with music on a five-line red stave, written in black ink in a fine liturgical hand, 16th century, Spain. With an estimate of £200–£300, it sold for £600. *A collection of sketches, ephemera and other items relating to William Makepeace Thackeray*, including an album of original unpublished sketches by Thackeray, a most unusual collection estimated at £4,000–£6,000, sold for £13,000. Also on offer was an *Autograph note by T.E. Lawrence (signed T.E. Shaw)*, about a production of *Revolt in the Desert*, with an estimate of £1,500–£2,000 but sold for only £1,200.

The general catalogue autumn 2006 of R.F.G. Hollett, 6 Finkle Street, Sedbergh, Cumbria, has many fine items, including #586, *Birds, Beast and Flowers*, by D.H. Lawrence, with 80 superb plates and illustrations after woodcuts by Blair Hughes-Stanton, folio with original vellum-backed marbled boards, Cresset Press, 1930, at £350.

Maggs Bros., London, has issued several new catalogues since my last column. From catalogue 1394, *Military & Naval History*, item #210: *Handbook of the Nomad, Semi-Nomad, Semi-Sedentary Tribes of Syria* with an introduction by Lt.-Col. John Bagot Glubb, published by Headquarters, Ninth Army, February 1942. Original blue card wraps with maps, no. 212 of 750 copies printed, with notation "This Document will be kept under Lock and Key when not in actual Use," most uncommon, being sold for £250. Item #86: *Memoir of Major-General*

Sir Henry Tombs, V.C., K.C.B., R.A., by Tombs, Woolwich, 1913, in full navy calf, priced at £150. Tombs served in the Gwalior Campaign in 1843 and eventually at the siege of Delhi, where he won his VC for saving the life of a fellow officer, Lt. James Hills, who incidentally had just won his VC. Maggs catalogue 1396, *Continental Books*, has many beautiful books, including item #19, *The Works of Cicero*, in 10 volumes, 16 mo, 17th-century French red morocco with gilt, at £4,500. This is a finely bound and extremely rare example of a complete set of Colines's pocket edition of the works of Cicero continued after his death by his stepson Robert Estienne, 1543–47. Also Maggs catalogue 1401, *Ditchling & Beyond, work by Eric Gill, David Jones, Edward Johnston, Hilary Pepler, Philip Hagreen, et al.*, has many fine books about books, such as #33, *Golden Cockerel Press—Procreant Hymn*, by E. Powys Mathers, 1926, illustrated with five copper engravings by Eric Gill, one of 200 copies at £580. Also #56, a proof wood engraving entitled *The Flood*, by David Jones, showing the flood engulfing the wicked, at £475.

Illustrated Books 2006, the catalogue from Bernard Shapero of London, included item #34, *Characteristic sketches of the lower orders, intended as a companion to the New picture of London*, by Thomas Rowlandson, 1820, London first edition bound in red half-morocco gilt with marbled boards and edges, a fine copy with 54 hand-coloured etched plates, at £1,950. Also of note was item #114, *A Picturesque representation of the Naval, Military and miscellaneous costumes of Great Britain...*, by John Augustus Atkinson, London, 1807, first edition folio with 33 hand-coloured aquatints, bound in full scarlet morocco gilt by Zaehnsdorf, at £13,500. Shapero also issued the catalogue *Travel 2006* with item #35, *The City of the Saints and across the Rocky Mountains to California*, by Richard Burton, London, 1861, first edition, octavo with folding maps, plans and plates, bound in blue half-morocco gilt, at £900.

John King is a bookseller based on B.C.'s Sunshine Coast.

PRINTING

The annual Grimsby Public Art Gallery Wayzgoose will be held on April 28. As usual, an anthology of pieces contributed by the participants will be issued; deadline for material is March 2. Presses interested in participating in the wayzgoose or contributing to the anthology should contact Rhona Wenger (rwenger@town.grimsby.on.ca).