A BIBLIOGRAPHY
OF THE BOOKS
PUBLISHED BY
THE BOOK CLUB
OF CALIFORNIA
1993–2009

THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA
AN ESSAY BY GARY F. KURUTZ ON A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF CALIFORNIA AND THE PACIFIC WEST, 1510–1906 BY ROBERT E. COWAN WITH AN ORIGINAL LEAF FROM THE CLUB’S 1914 FIRST EDITION SAN FRANCISCO THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA 1993


This book celebrates Cowan’s pioneering California bibliography published in 1914. As the inaugural book in The Book Club of California’s publication program, this landmark bibliography established many of the procedures and traditions that have guided the Club’s publication program over the last seven decades. The history of Cowan’s 1914 edition printed by Taylor, Nash, and Taylor and his enlarged 1933 edition printed by John Henry Nash is traced in an essay by Gary F. Kurutz. Each copy is accompanied by a leaf from the original 1914 edition and features portraits of Cowan and Nash.

CHARLES & KATHLEEN NORRIS THE COURTSHIP YEAR RICHARD ALLAN DAVISON THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA SAN FRANCISCO 1993


This book tells the dramatic story of a crucial year in the lives of a young couple who would become the toast of San Francisco and New York and widely acclaimed and loved literary figures. Davison, a noted authority on the Norrises, has skillfully selected and edited the letters which Charles G. Norris and Kathleen Thompson exchanged daily from March 1908, until their marriage in April 1909, while she remained in San Francisco and he ventured to New York. Davison’s introduction and running commentary provide important background and context and lend the letters the scope and pace of a novel.
H. H. Thomas. The 1848–1853 space indicates the period during which the book was written. This is an altogether scintillating read.

In the 1870s, Porter Garnett flourished in the city's Bohemian circles. He was one of the originators of the celebrated literary magazine The Lark, wrote fresh and brilliant literary criticism for the Pacific Monthly, produced a Bohemian Grove play entitled “The Green Knight,” and established the famous Laboratory Press in 1922 at the then Carnegie Institute of Technology in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. This essential volume is the first complete book on Garnett. It presents his writings on typography and the art of the book, and the writings and views of other scholars on these topics.

The author's enthusiasm about the potential of the Napa Valley for becoming a major center for producing grapes and the wine derived from them. Among other things, he describes how wine was sold in late 19th-century California, either directly as trade cards and labels. Types Weiss and Albertus. Bound in paper-covered boards with printed decorations. Title pasted on spine, plain paper-covered slipcase. Type set at Anchor & Acorn Press, Petaluma, and the Yolla Bolly Press, Covelo, California. 450 copies printed by Phelps-Schaefer and bound by Cardoza-James, both of San Francisco. Price $120.00.

A WIDELY CAST NET | SELECTIONS FROM THE WORK OF A VETERAN CALIFORNIA WRITER | CHOSEN WITH COMMENTS | BY THEIR AUTHOR: OSCAR LEWIS | WAYNE BONNETT | EDITOR | THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA | SAN FRANCISCO | 1996


The California | Gold Rush | A Descriptive Bibliography of Books and Pamphlets | Covering the Years 1848–1853 | BY GARY E. KURUTZ | INTRODUCTION BY J.S. HOLLIDAY | ILLUSTRATION | THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA | SAN FRANCISCO | 1997


Eight years in the making, Kurutz’s bibliography consists of detailed descriptions of 1,126 issues and editions of 707 individual works including their collations and bindings and references consulted. Kurutz visited leading Gold Rush collections throughout the country, including important private collections. He included published diaries, journals, reminiscences, collections of letters, guide
books, sermons, reports of mining companies, early directories with narrative accounts, satirical works, fiction written as fact, and novels contemporaneous with the 1848-1853 period.

1997

A VOYAGE | ORNAMENT | TO CALIFORNIA, THE SANDWICH ISLANDS, & AROUND THE WORLD IN THE YEARS 1826–1829 | BY AUGUSTE DUHAUTE-CILLY | TRANSLATED & EDITED BY AUGUST FRUGÉ AND NEAL HARLOW | ORNAMENT | SAN FRANCISCO, 1997 | THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA

A Breton sea captain, Duhaut-Cilly was possibly the first outlander to become intimately acquainted with Spanish California. He seems to have been trusted by the Catholic padres who, he said, “would never have discussed these matters with an American or an Englishman.” Printed nearly 70 years earlier in French and Italian and an incomplete English version in a journal, the Book Club’s is the first full publication in English. The captain sailed up and down the California coast from Fort Ross to Cabo San Lucas for nearly two years, visiting most of the missions, as well as all the ports, presidios, and pueblos.

1998

vignette | ARTFUL DEEDS | IN THE LIFE OF THE FELON, GROVENOR LAYTON ... | A TALE OF THE CALIFORNIA GOLD RUSH | INTRODUCTION BY | RICHARD H. DILLON | ORNAMENT | THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA | SAN FRANCISCO, 1998

News of Marshall’s 1848 discovery of gold brought tens of thousands of men to California, rushing for riches. Among those who stayed behind were a number of writers determined to cash in on the California craze. They penned purportedly true, but actually fictitious accounts of participation in the great adventure. Among the most authentic-seeming was the tale of Grovenor Layton, originally published in 1852. Layton was probably the pseudonym of the publisher A.R. Orton, but no trace of a Layton or Orton can be found in either Western history books or American literary biographies. The convincing, but false, story of Layton’s career of robbery, murder, and arson ends with his lynching in Sonora, California.

1998

ANOTHER | BOOK | THAT NEVER WAS | WILLIAM MORRIS, CHARLES GERÉ | THE HOUSE OF WOLFINGS | BY PETER STANSKY | ORNAMENT | THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA | SAN FRANCISCO | 1998
11 × 8. 76 pp. Title page with red and black ornamented border. Title printed over yellow background. 18 black-and-white illustrations. Type Cloister and Nicholas Cochin Black for display. Bound in brown decorated Fabriano paper over boards with iris cloth bound spine. Title on strip pasted in inset on spine. Designed by Christine Taylor, Wilsted & Taylor Publishing Services, Oakland, California. 350 copies printed at the Yolla Bolly Press, Covelo, California, and bound by Cardoza-James, San Francisco. Price $85.00.

One of the most famous images associated with William Morris was Charles Geré’s drawing of Morris’s home, Kelmscott Manor. Morris asked Geré to illustrate his proposed prose romance The House of Wolfings, but that collaboration was more difficult and the book was never produced. The Book Club publication includes fourteen of Geré’s sketches and reproductions of two of Morris’s letters with his own sketches suggesting how Geré might proceed in illustrating the book.

1999


In this book, Stauffacher outlines his remarkable career of more than 60 years as a major printer and scholar at his Greenwood Press and many other settings.
He served four years at the Carnegie Institute of Technology as an assistant professor of typographic design and director of its New Laboratory Press. This appointment was followed by his three years as director of typography at the Stanford University Press. Upon his completion of that position in 1966, he revised his Greenwood Press in San Francisco. His press has published the works of many authors, including the more recent Eric Gill, Henry Miller, and Albert Camus and the more distant Goethe, Plato, and Horace. The book includes a bibliography of his oeuvre, the extent of which is astonishing.

1999

COLIN FRANKLIN | EXPLORING JAPANESE BOOKS AND SCROLLS | ORNAMENT | THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA | 1999


Franklin’s subjects range from the earliest printed Buddhist charms to spectacular painted albums by artists famous and obscure, from popular illustrated volumes to maps, guides, and amusing English-language phrase books. The wide range of topics gives this book a unique place among works devoted to Japanese art. Franklin has drawn upon his own remarkable collection, the fruit of at least twenty-five journeys to Japan in as many years. He establishes that Japanese books and scrolls are visually delightful, approachable works that can be appreciated for their inherent artistic quality and beauty. The design of and illustrations in this book plus the authoritative text make it one of the finest of the Club’s publications.

2001

SPLENDIDE CALIFORNIE! | IMPRESSIONS OF THE GOLDEN STATE | BY FRENCH ARTISTS, 1786–1900 | CLAUDINE CHALMERS | FOREWORD BY JAMES MCCLENTCHY | THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA | SAN FRANCISCO, 2001

13 x 10. 160 pp. 80 illustrations, mostly in full color. Type Garamond. Bound in full dark green cloth on boards with pasted title on spine and inset illustration on cover, light green paper slipcase. 450 copies designed and produced by the Yolla Bolly Press, Covelo, California. Typeset by Farris Graphics, Covelo. Printed offset lithography and bound in South Korea by Yon Art Printing. Price $165.00.

This celebration of French art in California spans the period of the earliest New World voyages of French sea captains with their complement of classically trained artists, draftsmen, and scientists, to the Franco-American children of French Gold Rush artists, whose late nineteenth-century Impressionistic paintings forever marred the artistic legacy of the two nations. This collection of 80 images, many of which appear in print for the first time, contains paintings, sketches, lithographs, and photographs that informed and intrigued the artistic and scientific worlds and ordinary people as well. Paired with the exquisite plates are biographical essays on twenty-eight of the artists.

1999

JOHN DE POL | A CATALOGUE RAISONNE OF HIS GRAPHIC WORK | 1935–1998 | COMPILED AND EDITED | BY JAMES HOWARD FRASER AND ELEANOR FRIEDL | FOREWORD BY DONALD R. FLEMING | PREFACE BY JOHN DREYFUS | AND | A BIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY | BY CATHERINE TYLER BRODY | SAN FRANCISCO | THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA | 2001


This book is a tribute to the dean of American wood engravers with a biographical essay, catalogue raisonné, and many strikingly beautiful illustrations. De Pol began his artistic career as an etcher compiling a notable record in this medium. He later switched to wood engraving, where he achieved even greater renown. Many recognized him as one of the top wood engravers of his period. His engraved illustrations were widely published and shown in many exhibitions. Several fine printers have chosen him as the illustrator of their books, including Neil Shaver of the Yellow Barn Press and Lewis and Dorothy Allen of California’s Allen Press. He has received many institutional awards for his work. The catalogue raisonné in the book is almost complete, as he continued to work through advanced age as the book was readied for publication. There was no stopping him. Starting with its cover, which displays one of De Pol’s wood-engraved patterned papers, the book displays his exceptional artistry superbly.
2001

**JASPER O’FARRELL | SURVEYOR, FARMER, & POLITICIAN | BY GEOFFREY P. MAWN | INTRODUCTION BY CHARLES A. FRACCIA | EDITED BY ROBERT J. CHANDLER | ORNAMENT | SAN FRANCISCO – THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA – 2001**


Arriving in Alta California in 1843, twenty-six-year-old Jasper O’Farrell (1817–1875) aborted a planned journey up the Columbia River and over the Rockies to accept an appointment as Surveyor General of land grants in what is now Northern California. His practice continued from Mexican to American rule. Under O’Farrell’s direction almost all of the land grants north of San Francisco Bay were surveyed, as were the layouts for the cities of San Francisco, Benicia, and Stockton. Little was known about O’Farrell until a master’s candidate at the University of San Francisco, Geoffrey Mawn (1947–1982), searched state and county records from land grants to court cases. The result was his thesis, finished in 1970. This thesis is the foundation of this book. Mawn conducted research on O’Farrell, publishing it in California historical periodicals. The later publications take precedence over the thesis as sources for the text of the present book.

2002

**DEAR MASTER | ILLUSTRATION | LETTERS OF GEORGE STERLING | TO AMBROSE BIERCE | 1900 – 1912 | EDITED WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY ROGER K. LARSON | THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA | SAN FRANCISCO – 2002**


California poet George Sterling (1869–1926) impressed the literary figures of his time more than he did the general public. He became an intimate correspondent with many of these literary figures, but the one who exercised the most influence on Starling’s art and reputation was the notable Ambrose Bierce (1842–1913). Through the letters in this book, which are published in their entirety and cover a span of twelve years, one is able to follow a major portion of Sterling’s poetic career, changes in both writers’ lives, and the progressive changes in their relationship.

2003

**A MEMOIR | OF BOOK DESIGN | 1969–2000 | BY JOE D’AMBROSIO | THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA | SAN FRANCISCO | 2003**


In this innovative and unusual and important artists’ book, designer Joe D’Ambrosio utilizes a new and creative typography with roots in classical design. For his works, he writes as well as sets type, prints letterpress, creates original artwork, and binds books into unique structures that bring all the facets of bookmaking into one entity. This edition of D’Ambrosio’s memoirs relates the how and why of his entire body of work. It reveals for the first time not only a new way of presenting a text block on the page but also revives a lost pagination technique which will help those who have a problem with turning too many leaves at a time. The illustrations are of the bindings and internal structures of his books and convincingly demonstrate the inspiration he has demonstrated in his more than 30 years as a major creator of beautiful artists’ books.

2004

**THE COLT SPRINGS HIGH | A PUBLISHING MEMOIR OF THE COLT PRESS | 1938–1942 | BY WILLIAM M. ROTH | THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA | SAN FRANCISCO, 2004**

10 x 6 7/8. 332 pp. 36 unnumbered pages of illustrations, many in color. Type Kennerly. Bound in tan cloth on boards with title, author, and ornate decorations. Light brown cloth on spine with title and author. 500 copies designed, printed letterpress, and bound by the Arion Press in San Francisco. Price $175.00.

This book tells the story of the first phase of the Colt Press, a remarkable literary publishing house. William Matson Roth, the financial backer of the undertaking, is the author of this charming and informative account of a publishing venture with Jane and Bob Grabhorn that was both adventure and business. The books, trade editions intended for the general reading public, were exuberant, as charming and varied in their dress as they were worthy in content. They were attractively designed, sometimes playfully presented, and were manufactured to high standards. Among the authors published in the Roth era were Edmund Wilson, Henry Miller, and Frank Norris. In 1942 Roth entered military service. World War II effectively ended his publishing partnership with Jane and Bob Grabhorn.
The Reverend John Ignatius Bleasdale, D.D., although an unlikely figure in the history of California wine, was a large presence in it during the few years that he lived and worked in this state. He was a Catholic priest, teacher, administrator,
clubman, scientist, government agent, and—not least—an adviser to pioneer wine-makers. The main subject of his account is his involvement in wine making. What needed to be done in regions new to winemaking? Where could winemakers find help? How could they hope to find any sort of market? These and other questions are the sort that Bleasdale sought to answer, first in Australia, where he became a leading authority, and afterwards in California.

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ROBERT GREENWOOD \ ornament \ A VALIANT ENTERPRISE \ A HISTORY OF THE TALISMAN PRESS, 1851–1993 \ PRINTERS, PUBLISHERS, AND ANTIQUARIAN BOOKSELLERS \ THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA \ 2007


The remarkable history of California’s important Talisman Press is intertwined with the lives of its principals, Robert Greenwood and his longtime partner, New-ton Baird. The Press emerged from two major aspects of author Greenwood’s life. First was his development as an accomplished printer and second was his beginning as a poet and the extension of that literary interest to an absorption in the printing and publishing of California and Western Americana. Greenwood initially printed the books himself. Eventually he ceased being the printer and he and partner Baird had their books printed commercially. Among the important Talisman Books was *California Imprints, 1833–1862, A Bibliography*, edited by Greenwood and published in 1961. *A Valiant Enterprise* includes a supplement to this bibliography with 233 items not in the original.

They eventually ceased their publishing business. By that time they had established themselves in an important bookselling operation dealing in Western Americana and Californiana and working with first-rate libraries, major collectors, and other important booksellers. Their activities in this business lend themselves to another fascinating tale.

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surrounding pictorial border \ JAMES WELD TOWNE \ PIONEER \ SAN FRANCISCO PRINTER, PUBLISHER, & PAPER \ PURVEYOR \ THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA \ 2008

10 x 7. 230 pp. 31 black-and-white and color illustrations. Type Monotype Garamond. Bound in full paper colored cloth over boards with title printed in red on spine. 275 copies designed, typedest, and printed by Patrick Reach in Sebastopol, California. Price $125.00.

This in-depth study of Towne (1829-1917) describes on of San Francisco’s most influential commercial printers during the period 1853–68. Whether job, periodical or book work, Towne and his partners produced an enormous volume of printed material as San Francisco increasingly grew to be a major city. A list of the large number and variety of the Towne partnerships’ imprints (including periodicals and newspapers) is appended.

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illustration \ CALIFORNIA IN RELIEF \ THIRTY WOOD ENGRAVINGS BY \ RICHARD WAGENER \ THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA \ SAN FRANCISCO \ 2009


One of the leading American wood engravers, Richard Wagener has created a visual account of his wanderings throughout California in this lavish new work. In thirty original prints and short prose pieces describing them, Wagener chronicles a journey that begins and ends in Los Angeles with stops in the San Jacinto Mountains, the Antelope Valley, Sonoma County, and the Sierra Nevada. Like John Muir and Gary Snyder, Richard Wagener is an epic explorer, observer, and interpreter of California.

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JAMES MASON HUTCHINGS \ OF \ YOSEMITE \ A BIOGRAPHY AND BIBLIOGRAPHY \ THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA \ 2009


James Mason Hutchings was directly responsible for the spread of information on Yosemite’s astonishing scenic wonders and dedicated much of his life to preserving the Valley. This book tells his gripping story in its entirety. In 1855, following his visit
with one of the earliest tourist parties to Yosemite, Hutchings published the first views of the Valley to reach the outside world, and by the early 1860s, this adventurer and entrepreneur also managed one of the first hotels there. He became Yosemite’s most prolific author and leading advocate for Yosemite tourism, and his efforts shaped the future of this sublime place.

The book provides a detailed, illustrated examination of Hutchings’s life, his tireless methods of promoting Yosemite and his influence on nineteenth-century California literature. The biography synthesizes information from diverse sources and presents additional information not previously published. By tying these sources together with anecdotal writings from authors and travelers on the scene during the Hutchings years, the author has built a compelling narrative, with much new material on Hutchings’s Yosemite hotel-keeping activities, his travels, and his legal fight to preserve his Yosemite land claims.

In addition, the book contains a bibliography that provides an annotated listing of all known Hutchings’s publications and those he influenced. Most items in the bibliography are illustrated and some of them have never before been reproduced.

In 1929, Pasadena artists and sisters Frances, May, and Edna Gearhart created a children’s book illustrated with their original linoleum cuts and descriptive verses. It was not published. Eighty years later The Book Club of California has now brought the first edition of this charming work into publication.

Frances Gearhart (1869–1958) became the leading color woodcut artist in California during her lifetime, renowned for her dramatic landscape views of mountains, desert, and shore. Her use of saturated color, her sense of composition and her use of outline reflect her interest in Japanese prints. This series of children at play in our book combines Gearhart’s artistic sensibilities with a subject she knew well from her years of teaching. May Gearhart (1872–1951), a leading practitioner of the color etching, was the Supervisor of Art in the Los Angeles City School system, while Edna Gearhart (1879–1974), who was skilled at drawing, taught art at Los Angeles High School.

During the 1920s, all three sisters worked together in the gallery, where they offered their own prints and exhibited the work of leading international printmakers—the Gearharts were at the center of the printmaking world of Southern California.