

RARE BOOK and SPECIAL COLLECTIONS LIBRARY  
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## I. DESCRIPTION

A. Purpose: The Rare Book and Special Collections Library (RB/SCL), until recently known as the Rare Book Room, collects and preserves the rare, unique and otherwise special materials of the University Library. In addition to supporting research and instruction in a wide range of disciplines, its truly distinguished collections serve as a symbol of the greatness of the University and attest to its commitment to the preservation of the significant documents of the past.

The development of its collections has always been considered a responsibility to be shared by all members of the Library and teaching faculty, but the collections have been mainly assembled over the years by University librarians, the professional staff of the RB/SCL, and several members of the teaching faculty. All of these currently assist in the development of the collections, and suggestions from other sources for titles and collections within the RB/SCL's scope are seriously considered if funds are available.

While most of the material added to the RB/SCL is purchased on the General Research and the General Funds, distinguished titles and collections have been purchased on such special funds as the Library Friends, Ingold, Chester, Carmichael, Mandeville, and the Book Arts Funds. On many occasions the University's Research Board and campus departments have provided financial assistance. Gifts have also enhanced the collections immeasurably.

B. History of Collection: In the early years of the Library, from 1867 until about 1906, rare books were acquired only incidentally. Emphasis was initially on research in the agricultural and mechanical fields and later in the natural sciences. Basic monographs and serials were purchased as needed. During and after the tenure of President Edmund James, beginning about 1906, a number of special collections were acquired, chiefly the private libraries of European scholars and collectors. A number of rare books were thus acquired, but only incidentally as titles in these collections. As a general rule, no title costing over one hundred dollars was purchased.

The University Library's Rare Book Room was organized in 1937, its first major collections the great Shakespeare and Milton collections, built, respectively, by two distinguished scholars, Professors Thomas W. Baldwin and Harris F. Fletcher. Their concept of essential materials was broad and resulted in the acquisition of books printed mainly in England from 1501 to 1700. By 1937 the collection of Milton, Shakespeare, and Renaissance materials housed in Professor Fletcher's study had become so large (some 5,600 items) and its use so heavy that the Library assumed responsibility for the "Seventeenth Century Collection" and provided a librarian for its administration and maintenance. Consistently strong financial support by the University and the direction of Robert B. Downs, University Librarian from 1943 until 1972, brought a period of rapid and exceptional growth in these areas and in the many others summarized below. The collections quickly outgrew their quarters on the fourth floor of the University Library and were moved to

their present, vastly improved location in 1965. The completion of the sixth stack addition in 1984 provided additional space and an appropriate environment for their maintenance. To reflect present collecting interests, the name of the Rare Book Room was changed in 1985 to the Rare Book and Special Collections Library.

C. Estimate of Holdings: According to the 1984/1985 RB/SCL Annual Report its holdings consist of: 189,242 cataloged volumes; 22,533 reels of microfilm; 2,651 microfiche; 7,342 microprints; 545.6 cu. ft. of manuscripts; 1,398 bound manuscripts; and 82 currently received serials. (Restricted collections, i.e., the Closed Stacks, Storage, and Illinois Dissertations Collections transferred from the bookstacks, consist of: 40,519 cataloged volumes and 8,737 reels of microfilm.)

D. State, Regional, and National Importance: Many of the RB/SCL collections are known throughout the world. Its approximately 1,130 incunabula make it a major American repository. It is perhaps best known for its renowned Milton, Shakespeare, H.G. Wells, Carl Sandburg, and Marcel Proust collections. However, the RB/SCL houses especially strong and growing collections in: sixteenth through eighteenth century English literature; emblem books; the history of geology and other sciences; American wit and humor; early maps and geographical and celestial atlases; architecture; landscape art; seventeenth and eighteenth century German and French literature; early English and American children's books; and the finest examples of the printing arts from the fifteenth through the twentieth century. Recently the RB/SCL added the Motley, William S. Merwin, and Rainer Maria Rilke collections. While earlier collection development policy placed a heavy emphasis on the printed book, this has been expanded in recent years to include manuscript and some archival material.

Several of the many special collections merit mention. The (Fletcher) Milton, (Baldwin-Ingold) Shakespeare, H.G. Wells, Carl Sandburg, and Marcel Proust Collections are nationally known. Since the Motley Collection on costume and stage design and the Merwin and Mayer (Rilke) Collections were acquired recently, they are just now receiving public attention. This is also true of the Rogers Collection of Eighteenth Century English Literature which enhances the older Nickell and Sherburn Collections of works by Swift, Fielding, Pope, Defoe, Goldsmith, Richardson, Sterne, Johnson, Boswell, Addison and other writers of the period. In addition to the Nickell and Sherburn Collections, it is important to note other older and distinguished special collections: the Baskette Collection on Freedom of Expression; the Richard Bentley and Grant Richards archives; the Cavagna Collection on Italian local history; the Winston Churchill Collection; the Harwell Collection of Confederate Imprints; the Heron Lewis Carroll Collection; the Hollander Collection on the history and development of economics; the Larsen collections of Scandinavian literature and Norwegian folk tales; the Meine Collections on American wit and humor and on Mark Twain; the Rattermann Collection on the history and development of German culture in America; and the Doerner Collection of rare books and later works in literature, history, and other subjects.

The RB/SCL also maintains a reference collection of approximately 3,000 volumes to support research on the materials in its collections. This collection is supplemented by reference materials in departmental libraries and the general bookstacks.

E. Unit Responsible for Collecting: As noted below, responsibility for the development of the collections in the RB/SCL rests primarily with the RB/SCL professional staff and the Assistant Director for Special Collections. However, since the collections are so diverse and require expertise in many disciplines, all members of the Library and teaching faculty are encouraged to participate in the selection of materials which build on existing strengths. The scope and nature of the collections place special responsibilities on the professional staff of the Education and Social Sciences, English, Modern Languages, Commerce, Map and Geography, Geology, Biology, and Mathematics libraries to suggest both rare titles, as they appear on the antiquarian market, and contemporary titles of major/special importance.

F. Location of Materials: The RB/SCL is the repository for all rare, unique, and otherwise valuable material, and for selected, valuable contemporary material, in the University Library. Since departmental libraries lack necessary security and proper environmental control, they are requested to transfer rare materials from their collections to the RB/SCL as they are identified.

G. Citations of Works Describing the Collection:

BOOKS

Bennett, Arnold. Arnold Bennett and H.G. Wells: a Record of a Personal and a Literary Friendship. Ed., Harris Wilson. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1960.

Bentley (Richard) and Son, London. The Archives of Richard Bentley and Son, 1828-1898. Cambridge, Eng.: Chadwyck-Healey; Teaneck, N.J.: Somerset House, 1976. Indexed in Ingram, A. Index to the Archives of Richard Bentley and Son, 1829-1898.

Brichford, Maynard J., Robert M. Sutton, and Dennis F. Walle. Manuscripts Guide to Collections at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1976.

Crandall, Marjorie Lyle. Confederate Imprints: A Check List Based Principally on the Collection of the Boston Athenaeum. 2 v. Boston: Boston Athenaeum, 1955.

Harwell, Richard Barkdale. More Confederate Imprints. 2 v. in 1. Richmond: Virginia State University, 1957.

Herrick, Marvin Theodore. Italian plays, 1500-1700, in the University of Illinois Library. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1966.

Harman, Marian. Incunabula in the University of Illinois Library at Urbana-Champaign. Urbana: University of Illinois Library, 1979. (Robert B. Downs Publication Fund, no. 5).

Harold Mortlake & Co., Firm, Booksellers, London. Harold Mortlake & Co. Proudly Present Sir Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill. [London, 1969] (Its Catalogue 132) and Supplement [London, 1970?].

Hollander, Jacob Harry. The Economic Library of Jacob H. Hollander..., Comp., Elsie A.G. Marsh. Baltimore: Priv. print. [J.H. Furst company] 1937, and Addenda [n.p.] 1940.

Ingram, Alison. Index to the Archives of Grant Richard, 1897-1948. Cambridge: Chadwyck-Healey, 1981.

Illinois. University at Urbana-Champaign--Library. Catalog of the Rare Book Room. Boston: G.K. Hall, 1972. 11 v. and Supplement. 2 v. (1978).

Laurenti, Joseph L and Alberto Porqueras-Mayo. The Spanish Golden Age (1472-1700): a Catalog of Rare Books Held in the Library of the University of Illinois and in Selected North American Libraries. Boston: G.K. Hall, 1978.

Laurenti, Joseph L. A Catalog of Spanish Rare Books (1701-1974) in the Library of the University of Illinois and in Selected North American Libraries. New York: Peter Lang, 1984.

Major, Jean A. Collections Acquired by the University of Illinois Library at Urbana-Champaign, 1897-1974. Urbana: University of Illinois Library, 1974. (Robert B. Downs Publication Fund, no. 2).

Manuscripts and Printed Documents of the Archivio Cavagna Sangiuliani. Comp., Meta Maria Sexton. Urbana: University of Illinois Library, 1950. (Adah Patton Memorial Fund, no. 1).

McBurney, William Harlin. English Prose Fiction, 1700-1800, in the University of Illinois Library. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1965.

Porqueras-Mayo, A. and Joseph L. Laurenti. Estudios bibliograficos sobre la edad de oro. (Fondos raros v colecciones de la Universidad de Illinois) Barcelona: Puvill Libros, 1984.

Robbins, John Albert. American literary manuscripts: a checklist of holdings in academic, historical, and public libraries... Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1977.

Ward, Dederick C. and Albert V. Carozzi. Geology Emerging: A Catalog Illustrating the History of Geology (1500-1850)... Urbana: University of Illinois Library and the Graduate School of Library and Information Science, 1984. (Robert B. Downs Publication Fund, no. 8).

[Wells, H.G.] Catalog of the Wells Collection (v. 11 of the Catalog of the Rare Book Room. Boston, 1972.) (Illinois. University at UrbanaChampaign--Library)

#### SELECTED ARTICLES

Bell, J.F. "The Jacob H. Hollander Economic Library," Current Economic Comment. 31: 1 (February 1959): 21-28.

Downs, Robert B. "Rare Books in American State University Libraries," The Book Collector 61: 3 (Autumn 1957): 232-243.

Downs, Robert B. "The University of Illinois Library," Library Trends 15:2 (October 1966): 258-265.

Flanagan, John T. "Humor and Folklore Galore," Manuscripts 9:2 (Spring 1957): 89-95, 128.

McAnally, Arthur M. "The Evolution of a Rare Book Collection," Stechert-Hafner Book News 5:8 (April 1951): 105-107.

Ray, Gordon N. "The Bentley Papers," The Library 7:3 (September 1952): 178-200.

Ray, Gordon N. "The Tom Turner Library," The Book Collector 2:4 (Winter 1953): 258-62.

#### FINDING LISTS, EXHIBITION CATALOGS, AND SERIAL PUBLICATIONS

In addition to the citations above, there are numerous finding lists, exhibition catalogs, and two serial publications, which further describe the collections in the Rare Book and Special Collections Library. These were prepared by the University Library and are held in the Rare Book and Special Collections Library. Some of the finding lists include: "Clayton Papers" (The papers of Sir Robert Clayton), "Finding List of the Fodden Heron Lewis Carroll Collection of Letters, Photographs and Other Memorabilia," and "Henry Clinton: A Collection of Works by Defoe (Including Defoeana and Travel Literature.\*)" A sampling of the outstanding exhibition catalogs include: The Renaissance at Illinois: An Exhibit of Books on the Occasion of the Central Renaissance Conference, April, 1980, Shakespeare at Illinois: Notes on an Exhibition of the Ernest Ingold Folios and Other Shakespeareana in the University of Illinois, May 15 through July 15, Marcel Proust: A Centennial Exhibit, May 1971, An American Bookshelf 1776, (1976) and W.S. Merwin's Other Career: the Manuscript Archive of the University Library, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (1984). Two serial publications of the Library Friends also describe rare books and other special collections held in the Library: an annual, Non Solus, no. 1 (1974) to date; and a quarterly newsletter, Friendscript, v. 1 (1979) to date.

#### II. GENERAL COLLECTION GUIDELINES

A. Languages: Primarily English, Western European languages, and medieval Latin, but there are no restrictions.

B. Chronological Guidelines: No restrictions.

C. Geographical Guidelines: No restrictions.

D. Treatment of Subject: The RB/SCL acquires materials of scholarly significance in the major areas of its concerns. Frequently, the emphasis is not on subject matter per se, but on primary sources and examples of kinds of material, such as emblem books, incunabula, and fine printing. In the case of the Shakespeare and Proust collections, only rare items are acquired. In many cases, however, subject matter regardless of date of publication, price, or rarity is the important factor.

E. Types of Materials: Major emphasis is on acquiring primary, usually printed, materials. When this is impossible, facsimiles, microforms, and other types of reproductions are selected. Manuscripts and archives are acquired selectively. With some exceptions, they presently include all manuscripts predating the invention of the printing press, literary manuscripts of writers represented in the RB/SCL collections in their printed works, and special archives having literary, historical, and/or artistic significance (e.g., the Bentley and Grant Richards Archives and the Motley Collection). While the RB/SCL policy on manuscripts is highly flexible, it is partially influenced by the collection policies of the University Archives which contains the major collection of modern manuscripts in the University Library. Essential scholarly works and bibliographic and other reference works are acquired to support research in the areas in which the RB/SCL collects. The RB/SCL also houses materials falling into one or more of the following categories: monographs costing over \$200.00 per volume; titles important because of previous ownership or association; titles published in limited editions of 100 copies or less; materials having intrinsic/research value which can not be circulated because of their condition.

F. Date of Publication: There are no restrictions. However, it is University Library policy to shelve all monographs (and many serials) in the RB/SCL if they were published in continental Europe before 1701, in the United Kingdom, Asia, Africa, or Latin America before 1801, and in North America largely before 1851. It is also Library policy to include materials published at later dates if they are known to have special value on the antiquarian market.

G. Place of Publication: There are no restrictions, but the emphasis is on the United Kingdom, the United States, and western Europe.

III. COLLECTION RESPONSIBILITY BY SUBJECT SUBDIVISIONS WITH QUALIFICATIONS,  
LEVELS OF COLLECTING INTENSITY, AND ASSIGNMENTS

<u>SUBJECTS*</u>	<u>ES</u>	<u>CL</u>	<u>DL</u>	<u>ASSIGNMENTS</u>
<b>AUTHORS</b>				
W.S. Merwin (includes manuscripts)	5	5	5	ENGLISH/rb&scl
John Milton	5	5	5	RB&SCL/English
Marcel Proust (includes manuscripts)	5	4	5	FRENCH/rb&scl
Rainer Maria Rilke (includes manuscripts)	5	5	5	RB&SCL/German
Carl Sandburg (includes manuscripts)	5	5	5	RB&SCL/English
William Shakespeare	5	5	5	ENGLISH/rb&scl
H.G. Wells (includes manuscripts)	5	5	5	RB&SCL/ENGLISH
<b>TYPES OF PUBLICATIONS</b>				
Confederate imprints	4	1	4	RB&SCL/history
Early maps and geographical and celestial atlases	3	3	3	RB&SCL/MAP
Emblem books	4	4	4	RB&SCL
Fine printing and book arts	4	4	4	RB&SCL/BOOK ARTS
<b>SUBJECT AREAS</b>				
American wit and humor (includes manuscripts)	4	4	4	RB&SCL/English
Art, architecture, and landscape architecture	3	3	3	RB&SCL
Civil liberties and freedom of expression (Baskette collection)	4	1	4	RB&SCL
Early English and American children's literature	3	3	3	RB&SCL
History of science (especially geology, mathematics, and astronomy, early editions)	4	3	4	RB&SCL/GEOLOGY
Seventeenth and eighteenth century German and French literatures	3	3	3	RB&SCL/German/ French
Shakespearean theatrical productions (includes manuscripts)	4	4	4	RB&SCL/English
Sixteenth through eighteenth century English literature	4	3	4	RB&SCL

\*This is not a complete statement of all subjects and kinds of material found in the RB/SCL. It is a list of areas which are collected intensely and/or in which the RB/SCL has special strengths.