

THE BOOK

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Nancy Burkett and John Hench Announce their Retirements

Two long-time members of the AAS staff—Nancy Burkett and John B. Hench—have announced their intention to retire on August 31, 2006, after thirty-three years of service. They arrived at the Society within days of one another, and over the years have worked at many of the positions in the library and in the fellowships, publishing, and educational programs, ending up in leadership roles. Gifts honoring Marcus McCorison, now president emeritus, on his 1992 retirement

from the Society, endowed the position of the Marcus A. McCorison Librarian, a title that Nancy has proudly held for some fourteen years. John retires as Vice President for Collections and Programs. Searches are being conducted for two positions, those of curator of books and director of research, for which there are descriptions on the AAS website (<http://www.americanantiquarian.org/employment.htm>).

In a message to members and friends of the Society, Hench wrote that he was able to make the decision to retire at this time thanks to a year-long fellowship granted by the National Endowment for the Humanities to fund the writing of his book on Overseas Editions. His personal collecting of World War II Armed Services Editions and other series developed into a scholarly interest in the lesser known series representing American publishers' efforts to become major international players after the war. This work has been funded by a series of short-term research fellowships, capped with this opportunity to write the book.

In announcing her retirement, Burkett told her colleagues: "I am blessed to be in the enviable position of being excited about the prospect of a new pattern of life and sorry to be leaving the world of the library after so many rewarding years." Nancy and her husband, Randall K. Burkett, who have been commuting between Worcester and Atlanta, have purchased a condominium in the Georgia capital. Nancy writes that "Rand's Emory University stint, which was originally planned to be for two years, has now grown to nine. We want to live in the same city. Rand



John B. Hench and Nancy Burkett, who have worked at AAS since 1973, have announced their intention to retire.

loves his work and I love the city; we have many friends there."

During John's tenure, the programs of the Society have grown to include the honors seminar for undergraduates in Worcester colleges; the fellowship program, both long- and short-term; the Program in the History of the Book in American Culture, including the inauguration of the five-volume series, *A History of the Book in America*, the annual summer seminars, and public

programs such as lectures and concerts. All who have taken part in the summer seminars also remember appreciatively the gracious hospitality of the dinner, when rain or shine, John and Lea Hench welcomed matriculants into their home. Much of John's work has been behind the scenes, editing the publications of this learned society, the *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, bibliographies and other tools in service of scholarship, and others centered around print and early American culture. But as any editor knows, when this work becomes one's own work, there is little time for personal scholarship. This will now change.

Nancy's own publications are in African American history and include the three-volume *Black Biography, 1790-1950: A Cumulative Index*, edited with Randall K. Burkett and Henry Louis Gates, Jr. (1991). She has left her mark on the manuscripts collection and readers' services, departments in which she worked, but her legacy at AAS is reflected in her personal passion for books and their collectors. As the Society's collector for the past fourteen years, she acquired a long list of titles for the library. Many of these additions were entire collections that strengthened existing collections. Children's literature has grown with many additions among them many titles received by bequest of the late Ruth Adomeit, and now has its first curator, Laura E. Wasowicz. The acquisition of early Ohio imprints from the collection of Richard P. Morgan and reference books on early Western American history from the collection of Alvin Josephy are other acquisitions highlights. Nancy's friendships with collectors among

the Society's membership also became the foundation for the highly successful, informative, and fun series of Collectors' Roundtables at the annual and semiannual meetings.

Colleagues, members, current and past fellows, and other friends of AAS consider Nancy and John part of the fabric of the Society. Indeed, as long as *Under Its Generous Dome. A Guide to the Collections and Programs of the American Antiquarian Society* (2nd ed., 1992) remains the first and last word on the Society's history and holdings, their names, as its co-editors are formally joined in the AAS catalogue. Writing in the introduction to the first edition compiled as part of the Society's 175th Anniversary

Celebrations, they praised their colleagues' engagement with the materials in their care. "AAS staff members know the collections thoroughly and work continually to understand the pertinence of that material to new lines of historical inquiry; hence, they often become active participants in the scholarly research of our readers." While this is not likely to change any time soon, this statement also describes the contribution to scholars and scholarship that Nancy and John have made individually and as a team representing the American Antiquarian Society.

Caroline F. Sloat

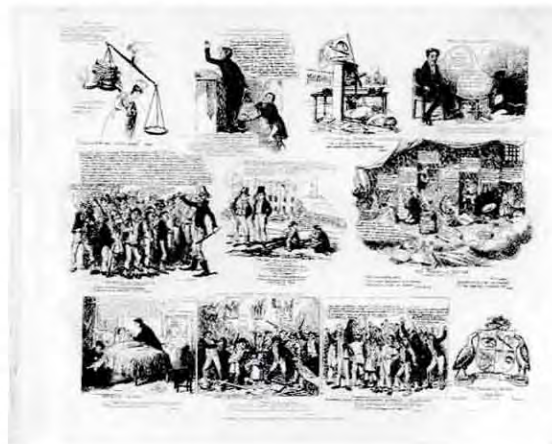
Research Note

"Anti-Catholic Doings:" David Claypoole Johnston's "Scraps for 1835" and the Ursuline Convent Burning

On August 11, 1834, a crowd of nativist workers burned the Catholic convent of Ursuline nuns that sat atop Mount Benedict, a gently-swelling hill overlooking the brickfields of Charlestown, Massachusetts. The riot, which sprang from deep-seated ethnic and class antagonisms, horrified professional and elite Bostonians, including the caricaturist David Claypoole Johnston (1799-1865). As a staunch Whig and a converted Catholic, Johnston was wary of the laboring masses generally and was troubled by the nativism that blossomed in 1830s Boston. Johnston's political views and religious beliefs propelled the caricaturist to design a sober page on the convent affair for the 1835 edition of his annual cartoon collection *Scraps*, which debuted in 1828 as a pictorial potpourri of social satire, visual puzzles, and pointed puns. The page of cartoons and text that resulted is a densely-packed composition of eleven pictorial vignettes framed by captions, literary quotations, and punning mottoes. Now included in the David Claypoole Johnston Collection at the American Antiquarian Society, the 1835 *Scraps* page offers an unusually rich meditation on the convent burning. A unique and complex historical document, Johnston's page is a focal point for the first chapter of my dissertation, which studies pictorial responses to rioting of the 1830s.

Like most of Johnston's *Scraps* pages, the 1835 convent sheet is loaded with information, including dozens of figures, strange creatures, various symbols, and paragraphs of text. How might an historian begin to decode the dense workings of Johnston's *Scraps* page? My own study of the 1835 sheet has focused on four facets of its signification: the overall organization of the page, the individual vignettes and their relations to other pictures, the web of text that frames the vignettes, and the interplay of this textual frame and the imagery on the sheet. Although the sheet advances several "messages," including an expression of sympathy for the Ursulines

and a warning about the consequences of popular violence, these modes of signification intersect most forcefully to make one argument: that rioting is pursued by deviant social agents originating outside the imagined mass of rational, self-disciplined democratic subjects. The rioters' status as social outsiders is suggested firstly by



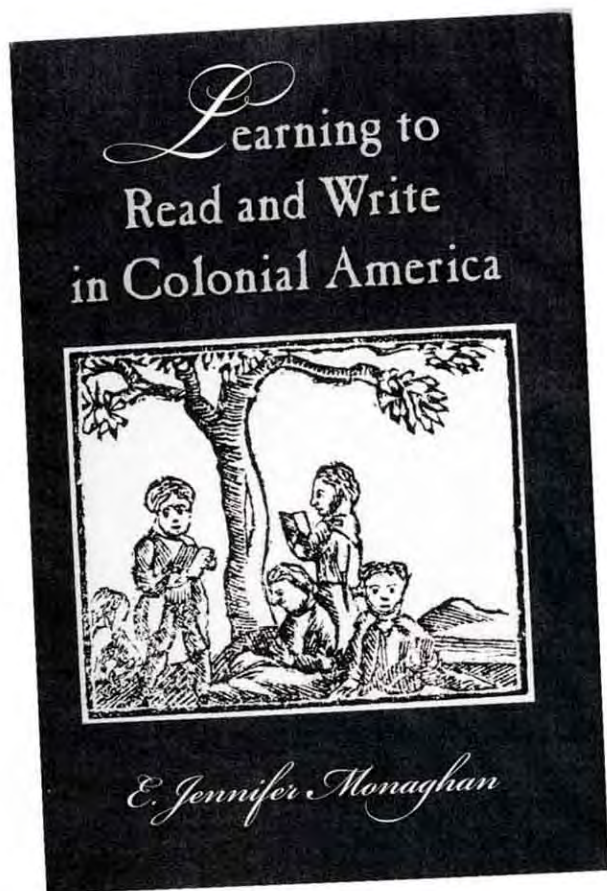
their brutally animalized appearance in two vignettes, "Anti-Catholic Doings" and "Defenders of the True Faith," at the middle left and bottom center of the page. The text of the rioter's speech in the latter cartoon in turn encourages us to understand the rioters' strange heads as physiognomically coded: the rioter punningly describes a minion's appearance as a "holy meat-axe physiognomy." Johnston was indeed interested in the linked "sciences" of physiognomy and phrenology, which found an early center in Boston. Read

through the physiognomic codes of the period, the strange heads of the rioters—small skull caps, sloping foreheads, and massive lower crania—would have indicated the irrationality, inability to reflect, and unrestrained impulsiveness of the convent mob. For a period viewer even remotely familiar with physiognomic principles, then, the deformed heads of the rioters would have immediately marked them as outsiders to the imagined body of ideal democratic political subjects. The organization of the page reaffirms the theme of riotous irrationality. When read in standard textual fashion, the scenes refer to events or figures before, during, or after the burning, without any neat temporal succession or overarching logic; the page is thus subtly encoded with the insanity or inebriety associated with the mob in the period. In marking the convent rioters as irrational and insensate, and thus as social agents outside of the democratic citizenry, the *Scraps* page answered deepening worries that rioting proceeded from dangerous energies and conflicts within the democratic order.

Ross Barrett, Boston University

AAS Inaugurates Collaborative Plan with Two Recent Publications

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The publications plan adopted by the Council of the American Antiquarian Society in January 2005 encourages the establishment of partnerships whenever feasible to advance the publication of work that substantially reflects the research resources of the Society. Such assistance was recently provided to two recently published books, which are described below. The Julian and Linda Lapidés Fund helped underwrite the publication of Jane Pomeroy's study and a grant to the University of Massachusetts Press from the Waldo Lincoln Publications Fund of AAS assisted in the publication of Jennifer Monaghan's work.*



E. Jennifer Monaghan. *Learning to Read and Write in Colonial America*. University of Massachusetts Press, 2004.

In lucid and unmanipulated prose, E. Jennifer Monaghan offers a deeply and broadly researched account of the on-the-ground mechanics of colonial America's literacy campaigns, from 1620 to the Revolution. This new history of American literacy even provides something of an alternative narrative of colonial America generally, by shifting the view to the schoolrooms and texts that transmitted reading and writing instruction, and by focusing on agents who still tend to be marginal in standard histories: children and the young, Indians and Africans. Her historical informants, or "witnesses," as she sometimes calls them, range from elites to the obscure, and from the Massachusetts Bay Colony and New York to Virginia and South Carolina. Chapters on Massachusetts Bay Indians (Wampanoag and Massachusett) in the seventeenth century and on Mohawk Indians in the eighteenth

assess the ways in which native peoples incorporated the imported technologies. Using sources such as the records of the Associates of Dr. Thomas Bray, a chapter on "Literacy Instruction and the Enslaved" demonstrates the growing restrictions on access to reading and writing for the enslaved, and the persistent "inconvenience"—the colonial euphemism for "menace"—that African literacy, especially writing, posed to whites.

The narrative deftly weaves together institutions, personalities, and practices. New England fatefully legislated the education of children in reading and, later, writing, and court records uncover direct and indirect evidence of literacy. Reading, used for spiritual regeneration, solace, and consolation, in the seventeenth century, is also a vehicle of sociability and communication for whites, and of acculturation for Native Americans and African Americans. Writing, in one sense, mere "penmanship," in this period, imitative and mechanical, is also a tool of gender distinction, of social mobility, of potential political action, and of religious devotion. Samuel Sewall's and Cotton Mather's late-seventeenth and early-eighteenth-century diaries reveal these elite fathers' impassioned interest in the education of their vulnerable children—most of whom don't outlive their parents; a Wampanoag or Massachusett Indian asserts his ownership of a Bible by writing "I...own this forever" in its margins; a young schoolmaster fresh out of college details in his diary the instruction he gives to the children of a Virginia planter in the 1770s. Along the way, the longstanding methodology of "spelling-as-reading" holds sway into the nineteenth century, with the spelling book significantly adding a secular text to what Locke called the "ordinary road" of literacy acquisition, through, that is, "the Horn-Book Primer, Psalter, Testament, and Bible." The unglamorous spelling book proves to be strikingly central to the circulation of literacy in the eighteenth century, standardizing not only the language itself, but also the methodology for transmitting it. The well-known transition from religious to secular pedagogy is here described in all of its local specificity, and Monaghan suggests the role of spelling books as "potential vehicles of secularism" (372).

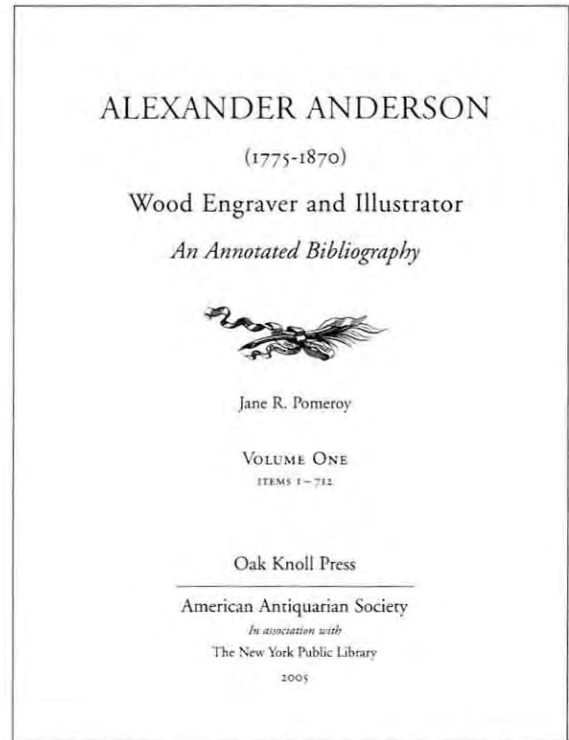
Monaghan's account details the structure of the elementary curriculum, in which reading was learned by the oral repetition of letters and syllables, and writing and arithmetic were, until the middle of the eighteenth century, beyond the reach of most girls. Along with the classicist's acumen and historian's care that Monaghan brings to her subject, her own work as a literacy educator lends a particular vividness to her descriptions of the everyday practices of reading and writing in the past.

Pat Crain, New York University

Jane R. Pomeroy. *Alexander Anderson (1775-1870), Wood Engraver and Illustrator: An Annotated Bibliography.* New Castle, Del.: Oak Knoll Press, American Antiquarian Society, in association with New York Public Library, 2005. 3 v. bibl., indexes.

Independent researcher Jane Pomeroy has worked for more than twenty years to document the output of prolific wood engraver Alexander Anderson, whose career encompassed nearly eight decades and thousands of books—from impressive Bibles to inexpensive children’s chapbooks. Described as the “American Bewick,” a reference to England’s premier contemporary engraver, Alexander Anderson was the first American engraver to perfect and employ the practice of white line engraving, a relief process in which the illustration is drawn and cut on the end grain of a hard wood block, thus heralding a revolution in the production of affordable illustrated books. Pomeroy’s chronologically arranged entries covering his long and complex career—ranging from a school text published in 1791 to artist Benson John Lossing’s memorial tribute to Anderson issued by subscription in 1872—are nothing short of magnificent. They include detailed descriptions of Anderson’s engravings with their corresponding page locations in each book. In addition, Pomeroy provides a bibliographic commentary on the printed quality of the engravings, and whenever possible, she locates earlier publications containing the same engravings; in so doing, she adds considerable illumination to our understanding of how popular wood engravings “migrated” from one publication to another over several decades. Pomeroy carefully cites the holding institutions of the books examined, including the Library of Congress, the American Antiquarian Society, the Huntington Library, and the Library Company of Philadelphia, as well as her own collection. Reproductions of Anderson engravings are sprinkled generously throughout the three volumes, attracting the user with exquisite and frequently provocative morsels of Anderson’s art. Perhaps the greatest strengths of this bibliography are the concise yet detailed descriptions of every engraving and their corresponding page locations that allow the fortunate user to visualize the image and easily find it. Ever the conscientious researcher, Pomeroy cites all relevant bibliographies in her entries, such as Evans, Shaw and Shoemaker, Sinclair Hamilton’s *American Book Illustrators*, and d’Alté Welch’s *American Children’s Books*—thus placing Anderson’s corpus within the context of long-standing bibliographic scholarship.

In addition to these marvelously detailed entries, Pomeroy has written excellent companion essays on Alexander Anderson’s life and career, his work for the New York Religious Tract Society, and subsequently, the American Tract Society, and source collections of surviving Anderson wood blocks. These essays deserve the attention of anyone desiring a better understanding of



how the development of print technologies (like stereotyping), national systems of distribution (like those created by the tract societies), and relief print techniques (allowing for easy insertion of engravings within a form of set type) all contributed to the rise of the American book publishing industry in the Antebellum Era. Moreover, Pomeroy reconstructs a movingly human Alexander Anderson as a man both full of humor and haunted by the specter of family mental illness. Three separate indexes: “artists and engravers,” “publishers, printers, and booksellers,” and “authors and titles” provide easy access to Anderson’s large corpus from the key vantage points of art history, the history of the book, and literary history.

Elegantly bound in three blue cloth volumes, Jane Pomeroy’s *Alexander Anderson* deserves a place on the reference shelf next to those great core bibliographies of Americana by Charles Evans, Sinclair Hamilton, d’Alté Welch, and Marcus McCorison. Her masterwork is now, and will remain the standing source on Alexander Anderson, to be cited by book dealers, eagerly searched by collectors, devoured by historians of the book, and praised by librarians. Bravo, Jane!

Laura Wasowicz, American Antiquarian Society

Book Notes

David Paul Nord, *Faith in Reading: Religious Publishing and the Birth of Mass Media in America* (Oxford University Press, 2004). 212 + x pp; cloth \$39.95; ISBN 0195173112

David Nord's *Faith in Reading* tells the story of the evangelical publishing societies of the early to mid nineteenth century, as they sought to ensure the United States remained a godly country. The members of these societies had a faith in the transformative power of reading that was as powerful as their faith in Christ's sacrifice, and it drove them to flood the country with Bibles, tracts, sermons, and religious meditations. Tract and Bible societies began to be founded in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia in the first two decades of the nineteenth century, but the three great national societies which are the heroes of Nord's story were the American Bible Society (ABS, 1816), the American Tract Society (ATS, 1825) and the American Sunday School Union (1824). And it is undoubtedly a heroic story: these societies printed and distributed enormous quantities of printed matter, and were astonishingly early innovators in the use of new production technologies. By the early 1820s, the ABS owned no fewer than twelve sets of stereotype plates of the complete Bible, which it used to keep twenty hand-presses running constantly. By the end of that decade, it had installed sixteen Treadwell steam-presses, and between 1829 and 1831, it was able to produce over a million copies of the Bible, enough to supply one in three households in the United States (68-69, 84).

But while the industrious production of these societies is amazing, it is in their distribution mechanisms that the curiosity really lies. Nord lays great emphasis on the difficulties the societies faced in getting their publications to the people who needed them. These were people who lived far from the usual book distribution channels and centers of religion, but—even more problematically—they were people who probably had neither the money nor the desire to purchase. The societies created extensive distribution systems to move their publications against the flow of the free market, including the ATS's system of colporteurs who traveled from town to town to sell books and tracts, but more often giving them away.

Nord's key concern is with the societies as corporate bodies, their modes of organization and their relationship to the market. For instance, he hails the ATS's system of training sessions, reports and district managers as an early version of corporate middle management. Chapters 6 and 7 do examine some examples of reading experiences, but they are more suggestive than ultimately revealing. Nor are we given much sense of what the contemporary literary marketplace was like,

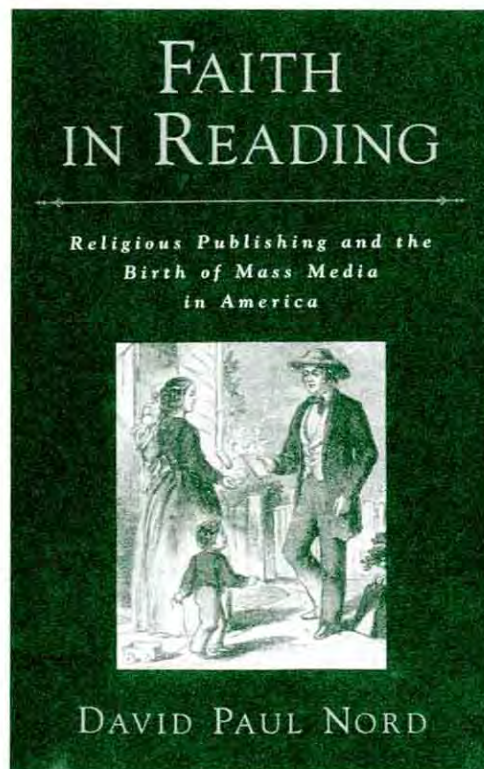
to appreciate either what the competition was for the evangelical societies, or how distinctive these societies were in relation to other publishers of cheap instructive reading material.

As a historian who knows quite a lot about British evangelical societies, I found *Faith in Reading* fascinating, and was constantly struck by similarities—and by intriguing differences. I was disappointed that Nord said so little about his American societies in the context of the British societies they imitated, but of course, most British and American historians—including historians of the book—do tend to focus on their own areas of specialization. If one thinks about Nord's book in the context of my own work on the Religious Tract Society (RTS, London, 1799) or Leslie Howsam's on the British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS, London, 1804), there are a number of things that stand out.

Perhaps most striking is the American emphasis on geography, contrasted with the British emphasis on social class. Where the stories of the BFBS and RTS seem determined by their efforts to reach out to those less fortunate than themselves but living in the same cities, the stories of the ABS and ATS seem to be constantly concerned with transcending geographical obstacles to distribution. A huge problem for the ATS was that their auxiliary societies were strongest in New England, but weak or nonexistent in the western territories and southern states where the real work needed to be done. Unable to rely upon auxiliary societies to manage distribution, therefore, the ATS devised its incredible system of colporteurs, and paid them salaries to avoid the temptation to

focus on more affluent areas or households. The RTS did have strong auxiliaries in the right places, and moreover, it used the established channels of the book trade whenever it could. When both those channels proved wanting, the RTS could then rely upon societies who specialized in reaching the working classes: city missions, scripture readers' associations and YMCAs.

I suspect that the apparently stark contrast between the ATS and the RTS is actually an artifact of their historians' choice of emphases. Presumably, in Boston, New York, or Philadelphia, the activities of the ATS looked very similar to those of the RTS in Manchester, Liverpool, or London. And the RTS did actually do substantial amounts of work in areas far away from its administrative and financial heartlands, but this work was largely overseas, in India, China, and Australia and thus is studied separately by historians.



Examining Nord's case for the ATS as a modern business corporation *avant la lettre* from the British perspective is also illuminating. There is a growing British literature on evangelicalism and business—in which Jane Garnett has been one of the principal players—that examines how the strictures of Christianity on such matters as profits, extending credit, and bankruptcy affected the running of commercial business ventures. In Nord's account of the ATS and ABS as corporations, the reference-point is to business history and Christianity is striking in its absence. Having devoted substantial time to thinking about the RTS's attitude to profits, I was surprised how two groups with such similar aims and theology as the ATS and RTS seem to have adopted rather different business models. The ATS took its status as a nonprofit-making organization very seriously: it did not build up capital reserves, nor was it at all sure that it was acceptable to sell any of its publications at a profit to those who could afford to pay. The RTS, on the other hand, regarded profits as the desired result of a properly-run business and as a God-given opportunity to do more good work, and it happily built up reserves to ensure that the good works could be continued in the lean years. The most significant income stream for the RTS was the sale of publications at a small profit to middle-class believers, and this was how missionary efforts were funded. The ATS appears to have been routinely cash-strapped and almost

entirely reliant upon its charitable income. (Nord never really explains how it managed to pay the salaries of five hundred colporteurs every year.) Nord may be right that the ATS possessed several attributes of modern businesses, but it seems to have lacked the financial shrewdness and attention to long-term planning which would have better enabled it to carry out its mission.

Nord has produced an important book which does sterling work in placing the activities of evangelical publishing societies back into the history of nineteenth-century publishing, where I firmly believe they ought to be. And as an American historian, he can hardly be blamed for the innate biases that go with that role. But I do remain struck both by the apparent differences between equivalent societies on opposite sides of the Atlantic, and by the different ways in which they are treated by their historians. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could all find time to read more widely outside our own field?

Aileen Fyfe, National University of Ireland, Galway

- 1 *Science and Salvation: Evangelicals and Popular Science Publishing in Victorian Britain* (2004), and articles including "Commerce and Philanthropy: the Religious Tract Society and the Business of Publishing," *Journal of Victorian Culture* 9, no. 2 (2004): 164-88, which focus on the RTS.

William Merrill Decker, *Epistolary Practices: Letter Writing in America before Telecommunications* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998).

Whether by historians or literary scholars, the study of letter writing in nineteenth-century America remains surprisingly thin. In 1992, Karen Lystra published a compelling monograph, *Searching the Heart*, on romantic love which featured personal letters, but it was not about letter writing *per se*. Just recently, at the end of 2005, David Gerber published his long-awaited magisterial account of immigrant letters, *Authors of their Lives*. These are not the only books in the subfield of nineteenth-century American letter writing, but they are the main ones. (It should also be noted that David Henkin is currently completing what surely will be a major contribution to this subfield.) Between them stands William Decker's contribution as a literary scholar. Decker confronts the central quandary of the scholar of letter writing in the nineteenth century, and that is the transformation of personal communications by the telegraph in mid century and then by the telephone at century's end. Unsurprisingly, these exciting new technologies tend to dominate narratives of transformation with respect to the nineteenth century—I am thinking of, for instance, Carolyn Marvin's marvelous *When Old Technologies Were New*—but Decker is less interested in the emergent and the ostensibly "modern," and more concerned with the residual and the "pre-modern." In a context of widespread geographical mobility in the nineteenth century, Americans continued to rely upon letter writing even as new communications technologies became available. Decker thus focuses on the long era before the instantaneousness of the telegraph and

telephone, when people's conception of space and time still required a considerable amount of imaginative faith and material anxiety, rather than instant gratification. Decker's, then, is at heart a recovery project — the recovery of an unfamiliar pre-modern world steeped in imagination and materiality.

Yet there is another way in which Decker is at the same time oriented to "the modern," and that is with the modern American fascination with personal letters written by historical and literary figures. The early nineteenth century saw the first in-earnest publication of personal letter collections in the United States, beginning with letters of the so-called Founding Fathers selected for purposes of hagiography. This cultural trend culminated toward the end of the twentieth century with an extraordinary commitment to the publication of comprehensive scholarly editions of the personal letters of historical and literary figures, whether George Washington or Mark Twain. This, to Decker, amounts to a peculiarly modern fascination with cultivating an image of the historical and literary past emphatically with an *individual*—a locus of identification—placed at the center of that image of the past.

Decker's strategy, in turn, is to place the letter at the center of an individual; he interrogates not the individual, but what the letter could do for the individual. Above all, Decker is concerned with letter writers' awareness of the relative capacities and incapacities of letter writing. What was the relationship between a letter and surrounding constraints of space and time? To what degree was a letter able to foster desired social intimacy? Indeed,

perhaps the most pervasive theme of personal letters written between the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries was the characterization, explanation, and justification of the status of letters themselves, amid tremendous uncertainties. Would a letter even reach its intended recipient? Would it be understood? Would it be answered? These were the pressing concerns of a pre-modern world before the instant gratification of modern telecommunications. As a consequence, pre-modern folk devoted a considerable portion of their letters above all to affirming a wish and will to correspond — to the communication process itself, in other words, quite apart from the actual substance of a letter.

Decker devotes Chapter 2 to an examination of non-literary writers of letters spanning the fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries, many of whom have achieved a certain canonical status, such as John Winthrop and Abigail Adams. Here, Decker is particularly interested in the representation of geographical distances that worried migrants in what scholars now call an “Atlantic world,” as well as in the representation of a tension between public and private life that worried religious and political figures. However, the bulk of the book—Chapters 3 to 5—is devoted to the personal letters of three nineteenth-century literary figures: Ralph Waldo Emerson, Emily Dickinson, and Henry Adams. Decker considers non-literary writers to be ensnared in expressive formulas that primarily reveal their biting anxieties about the ability of pre-modern letter writing to transcend distance and separation. On the other hand, literary writers were, according to Decker, more self-conscious and experimental in their writing of letters than ordinary people. Emerson, Dickinson, and Adams pushed against formula even as they too grappled with distance and separation. Ultimately, through close and sensitive interpretation of personal letters, Decker seeks to pinpoint special literary exceptionalism in the letters of literary figures.

This is not, of course, a historical or even a historicist reading of the changing cultural role of the personal letter between the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries. For Decker, the pre-modern world remains largely static and quite resilient, pending the fullness of a technological transformation into the modern era of telecommunications. Hence, Decker’s book is most useful as a model of close interpretation of personal letters, and as a sensitive touchstone of crucial cultural themes: geographical distance and chronological time, public and private, formula and experimentation. The modern world of instantaneous telecommunications has not made these particular themes vanish, of course. The configuration is altered, although Decker stops short, except for brief remarks in the conclusion, of concerted comparison between the pre-modern and modern worlds. With so much scholarship on, say, the epistolary novel in the eighteenth century, and on, say, the radio and the computer in the twentieth century, one hopes that Decker’s and now also Gerber’s books will stimulate greater investigation of letter writing and communications in the nineteenth century.

Konstantin Dierks, Indiana University, Bloomington

HBA to UNC

The University of North Carolina Press has teamed with AAS as the publishing partner of *A History of the Book in America*, the Society’s five-volume collaborative history of the book project. At its late-March meeting, the board of directors of the Press voted to accept Volume 3 for publication and to work with the Society to produce the remaining volumes in the series over the next two to three years. North Carolina will also reissue Volume 1, *The Colonial Book in the Atlantic World*, edited by Hugh Amory and David D. Hall.

Editors of *The Industrial Book, 1840–1880*, volume 3, are Scott E. Casper, University of Nevada at Reno, Jeffrey D. Groves, Harvey Mudd College, Stephen W. Nissenbaum, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and Michael Winship, University of Texas at Austin. This volume will appear in the spring of 2007.

The titles of the three remaining volumes and the editorial teams are: Volume 2, *An Extensive Republic: Print, Culture, and Society in the New Nation*, Robert A. Gross, University of Connecticut, and Mary Kelley, University of Michigan; Volume 4, *Print in Motion: The Expansion of Publishing and Reading in the United States, 1880–1945*, Carl F. Kaestle, Brown University, and Janice Radway, Duke University; and Volume 5, *The Enduring Book: Publishing in Post-War America*, David Nord, Indiana University, Joan Shelley Rubin, University of Rochester, and Michael Schudson, University of California at San Diego. These volumes, which include essays by more than one hundred contributors, are all drafted and approaching completion.

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185 Salisbury Street

Worcester, Massachusetts 01609-1634

Telephone (508) 755-5221

E-Mail: csloat@mwa.org

Ellen Dunlap, President

John B. Hench, Vice President for Collections and Programs

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Editor: Caroline Sloat

The editors welcome all news relevant to the interests of the Program in the History of the Book in American Culture.

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LIBERTY/ÉGALITÉ/INDEPENDENCIA:

PRINT CULTURE, ENLIGHTENMENT, AND REVOLUTION IN THE AMERICAS 1776-1826



Online registration for the 2006 Summer Conference is now open. The AAS website (<http://www.americanantiquarian.org/liberty.htm>) has been augmented with additional information about the conference. Abstracts of each talk are being posted as they are supplied by the speakers. A block of rooms has been reserved at the nearby Worcester Courtyard by Marriott. The

deadline for hotel reservations is Friday, May 19, 2006, after which any remaining rooms will be released.

David S. Shields, the conference chair, will deliver the keynote address, also the twenty-fourth annual James Russell Wiggins Lecture in the History of the Book in American culture. "We declare you independent whether you wish it or not": The Print Culture of Early Filibusterism" is the title of his lecture. In 2003 Shields was appointed McClintock Professor of Southern Letters with appointments in the English and history departments of the University of South Carolina. He is author of *Civil Tongues and Polite Letters in British America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), *Oracles of Empire: Poetry, Politics, and Commerce in British America, 1690-1750* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), and is a contributor to the first two volumes of *A History of the Book in America*.

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