

B. Catton, a professor of history at Middlebury College, with whom he had jointly written two additional books. The latest of these, published in late 1978, just after Bruce Catton's death, is *The Bold and Magnificent Dream: America's Founding Years, 1492-1815*. Father and son wrote different chapters, and it would have pleased the father that such a Catton student as the undersigned tried to identify five of Bruce's passages and came up with only two right—batting, as he would have said, only .400.

We have had on the Society's roster a man of enormous character and brilliance. He said once, back in 1956 at the Loomis School in Connecticut (he was typically giving a graduating address as a favor to a friend): 'It is the noble dreams of men which live the longest. . . . Shakespeare was a cynic when he remarked that the evil men do lives after them. The evil is of short life. It is the good that survives. It survives in brick and stone, in human institutions that go on working long after the men who founded them have been gathered to their fathers. It survives in the hearts of men who . . . re-examine their debt to the past.'

That is the business of the American Antiquarian Society as it was of our late good friend, Bruce Catton.

Oliver Jensen

SINCLAIR HAMILTON

Sinclair Hamilton, lawyer, book collector, and preeminent authority in the field of early American book illustration, died in his house in Edgartown, Martha's Vineyard, on August 28, 1978. He was ninety-three.

A lifelong New Yorker, except for some of the years of his growing up, he was born in Manhattan on October 17, 1884. His father, Samuel Hamilton, had come from Belfast in 1873 to accept the pastorate of the Second Scotch Presbyterian

Church in New York. His mother, Emily Porter, a Philadelphian, was the niece of Gen. Horace Porter, who was present at Lee's surrender and wrote *Campaigning with Grant*.

Graduating from Princeton in the Class of 1906, and from Columbia Law School in 1909, he went to work at \$10 a week for the Wall Street law firm of Masten & Nichols which, after mergers and changes of name during the past seventy years, is embodied in the present firm of Milbank, Tweed, Hadley & McCloy. He became a partner in 1917 and was the oldest partner at the time of his death. Brief biographical notes that he left on file at his office include the comment, 'During his active years he handled many security issues and attended to the settlement of many estates.' In a letter to President Robert Goheen of Princeton, he once commented that he had devoted his professional life 'to keeping, rather than getting, people out of trouble,' and that his calling produced 'no headlines, only headaches.'

His chief avocation, collecting, began when an older member of the firm encouraged him to buy an etching by D. Y. Cameron. He discovered increasingly, however, a love of old books. He was a bookish man, and reading out loud, at home, with his wife and their friends was long a part of his life. The foundations of his collecting lay in his literary interests, and he had, as well, a scholarly bent that was confirmed and cultivated by his practice of law. At the core of his reading was the tradition of the English novel—*Tom Jones*, *The Vicar of Wakefield* (which he read almost yearly), *Vanity Fair*, Trollope and Dickens, Jane Austen and Charlotte Brontë, Kipling and Conrad. He was sympathetic to the leisurely pace and conversational tone of the English world of Georgian and Victorian fiction. In his gradual discovery and acceptance of his own tastes, perhaps it is not surprising that he found a growing partiality for American books of those same centuries. They were, for him, enduringly interesting and entertaining, but he had a more profound feeling, akin to rever-

ence, for the books in his first major collection, examples of the work of great printers and illustrators, including several score of incunables. These he collected in the Twenties and (at Depression prices) in the Thirties; he kept tight control of his collecting budget, and bought carefully; often he could afford only a second edition, but he built a fascinating library of milestones and exemplars, and he acquired some great books.

Early in these explorations he discovered an affinity for woodcuts and wood engravings, and in the Thirties the catalogues issued by Maurice Sloop in New York helped to lead him further into this field. An exhibition of Winslow Homer's wood engravings for *Harper's* and other magazines 'seemed to me extremely fine,' he later wrote, in a brief reminiscence, 'and I began to collect Homer illustrations.' He does not mention the source of the exhibition, but it was probably held by Sloop, or by Harry Shaw Newman at the Old Print Shop. He continues:

And then I got the notion that a collection of early American illustration in the woodcut and wood engraving might be an interesting collection to form. I knew, of course, of David McNeely Stauffer's book on American copper and steel engravings and it occurred to me that a collection such as I had in mind might form a good foundation for a book on the American woodcut and wood engraving, for, humble though they be, many of our early woodcuts are delightful and have a fascination that the more grandiose intaglio prints lack. I did not work forward in time from Winslow Homer, but rather backward in time. I picked up illustrations by such men as Augustus Hoppin, the portrayer of polite society who created graphically Miss Flora McFlimsey of Madison Square who found herself in utter despair because she had nothing whatever to wear and Miss McBride who minced along in fashion's tide adown Broadway on the proper side. And then there was John McLenan, totally forgotten today, but who at his best was really a great illustrator, and Hammatt Billings, of Boston, a most prolific illustrator, especially in children's books, but who did some very effective drawings for the first edition of

Uncle Tom's Cabin, and there was Sol Eytinge, so thoroughly Victorian, who illustrated Dickens and whom Dickens praised for his 'most agreeable absence of exaggeration.' One wonders what Dickens really thought of Phiz.

In the beginning I did not go further back than the 1790s when Alexander Anderson, known as the father of American wood engraving, began working, for most books and articles which touched on American illustration had treated him as the fountain head of American illustration, but later I found hundreds of American woodcuts or type metal cuts in books well back into the 18th century, some of them delightfully naive and chiefly, I suppose, copied from English originals. I found an excellent source in the local broadsides, which, like *Life* and the late lamented *Look*, kept the populace informed of current events.

In 1945 he presented a collection of American illustrated books to Princeton, but not before he had carefully catalogued each book. At the suggestion of Philip Hofer, he obtained a small number of mimeographed copies of the catalogue which he distributed to collectors and bibliophiles. One of the few to receive this first version of what today is known as 'Hamilton,' the authoritative reference work in the field, was Clarence Brigham. He and Sinclair Hamilton had known each other since 1940, when Brigham gave a lecture at the Grolier Club. Writing to accept the mimeographed copy, Brigham mentioned, 'For the past year I have been much interested in the illustrator, Augustus Hoppin, and am making a Checklist of the books which he himself wrote and also those which he illustrated. The latter contains over 60 titles and I think I could send you a carbon copy of the list. Mr. Theodore Bolton sent me a list of the titles which he had found, I imagine based upon your Princeton collection.' Sinclair Hamilton, as his own remarks, quoted earlier, reveal, had a particular fondness for the work of Hoppin, and this interest was one of the first of many which he and Brigham shared over the years. In their first correspondence, in 1940, they had discussed whether or not several relief cuts in Boston almanacs before the Revolu-

tionary War were engraved by Paul Revere. One of many later exchanges, this time with Clifford Shipton, but with contributions by Brigham, as well, had to do with a woodcut frontispiece signed 'P.F.,' apparently the initials of Pompey Fleet, a Negro slave who worked in the printing office of the Fleet family in Boston before the Revolutionary War.

Sinclair Hamilton was elected to the American Antiquarian Society in April 1947. He lost no time in writing to say that he was on a Grolier Club committee to prepare an exhibition of American bookbinding and would like to visit the Society to see if some bindings could be lent. On this mission, he and his wife, Christine, herself an accomplished binder, visited the Society in the early summer. He showed his pleasure at being a member in other ways. On March 5, 1948, he wrote Clarence Brigham, 'The enclosed letter from Isaiah Thomas to the Governor of Maryland, Sept. 27, 1820, thanking him for an addition to the Library of the American Antiquarian Society, came up at auction the other day and I bought it thinking the American Antiquarian Society might like to have it.' Six months earlier, he had sent Brigham a book: 'It is not a very good copy of *Merry Mount*, but was a presentation copy from Motley to Edmund Quincy. Both Motley and Quincy being members of the Antiquarian Society, it seemed to me that it might be a nice idea to have it in the Society's files, assuming you have enough shelf room for one more book.'

At the time of Sinclair Hamilton's election in 1947, he was sixty-two; his quiet and steady approach to life, and his desire not merely to collect American illustrated books but to perfect and polish his catalogue, meant that it took time for his achievement to be understood. Not until 1958 was he willing to allow the catalogue to be printed. He gave it the title *Early American Book Illustrators and Wood Engravers, 1670-1870*, and settled upon an edition of 650 copies, issued under the imprint of the Princeton University Library. Reviews appeared during the next three years; scholars and collectors

during that time discovered the book and bought enough copies to put it out of print. Princeton University Press was glad to reprint it in 1968, with a second volume reflecting the continuing growth of the collection. In 1960, Princeton awarded him the degree of Doctor of Humane Letters, and ten years later, when he was eighty-three, Princeton presented him the fourth Donald F. Hyde Award for Distinction in Book Collecting and Service to the Community of Scholars. At that time, he was far from finished with his collecting enterprise, which had, in a way, become a second career; he continued to buy books for his collection at Princeton until the early months of 1978, and at his death he left a more or less complete typescript of a third volume of his catalogue.

He had a clear sense of the landmarks in the field he was exploring. The most important, John Foster's woodcut portrait of the Reverend Richard Mather, continues to be considered the first print made in British North America. The block was cut, it is thought, in 1670. Only five prints from it are known, and no impression came on the market during Sinclair Hamilton's collecting years. It was his good fortune that a fellow Princetonian, Frank Jewett Mather, Jr., had owned an impression. In memory of Frank Jewett Mather, Jr., his wife, daughter, and son presented the print to the Princeton University Library.

A second milestone is also the work of John Foster. It is the Massachusetts seal cut on wood in 1675, at the time Foster opened his press in Boston, and first used by him at that time. The example in the Hamilton collection is printed at the top of an official Massachusetts-Bay Colony broadside of 1680 setting aside April 15 of that year as a 'Day of Humiliation and Prayer.'

Early in 1955 Sinclair Hamilton purchased a copy of the broadside. He immediately wrote Clifford Shipton: 'It is number 33 on page 28 of the list made by Matt B. Jones and published in the *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian So-*

ciety for April 1934. Evans (287) and Ford (76) locate a copy at the American Antiquarian Society but Mr. Jones says that this is an error. I will much appreciate it if you will let me know whether Mr. Jones is right about this or whether you do have a copy.'

As a result of this inquiry, he and Clifford Shipton and Clarence Brigham learned that he and the American Antiquarian Society, which badly wanted the broadside, too, had been bidding against each other. 'Well, at least it went to a friend,' wrote Shipton. 'Now sir, how about (1) giving it to us (2) giving us a positive photostat which we can use to reproduce in the microprint series.' 'Woe is me! I had no idea I was competing with the American Antiquarian Society at the DeCoppet auction,' Sinclair Hamilton replied, and he explained, 'I have been looking for years for an impression of John Foster's cut of the Massachusetts seal (which is almost a *sine qua non* for my collection at Princeton) and so, when one came up, I was ready to plunge for it. The broadside has already gone to Princeton but I am sure that they would give you a positive photostat which can be used for reproduction in the microprint series. It is even possible that you may have some duplicate of another broadside containing the Foster cut and that an exchange might be arranged, although candor compels me to say that the cut on the broadside I picked up seemed to be an unusually clear and good impression.' There the matter rested after a rueful, and edged, rejoinder from Shipton: 'Clarence and I would not have felt that we could have afforded to go to \$500, and I assume someone must have driven you up to that price, so perhaps this is the best outcome after all.' Sinclair Hamilton's final word on the matter came three years later. Brief and factual, it returns to the question he had originally asked, and provides an answer that is the last sentence of the entry for the broadside in his printed catalogue of 1958: 'Both Evans and Ford locate a copy of this broadside at the American Antiquarian Society but this is an error.'

One more landmark that should be mentioned is the woodcut portrait of James Hodder in the Boston, 1719, edition of *Hodder's Arithmetick*, printed by James Franklin. Sinclair Hamilton looked upon Lawrence Wroth's catalogue of 1946, *American Woodcuts and Engravings*, in which Wroth gave cogent arguments for attributing this and a number of other cuts to James Franklin, as one of the major contributions to the history of woodcuts and wood engravings in America. He regarded Wroth, as he did Brigham, with something akin to awe when he viewed his scholarly accomplishments. His feeling about the place of James Franklin as a very early practitioner of woodcut was so strong that, although he had long owned a copy of *Hodder's Arithmetick* with the frontispiece portrait, late in his life he could not resist a second and better copy, although the price was more than a thousand dollars.

As his interest in American book illustration became and remained, for him, primary, Sinclair Hamilton gave most of his collection of landmarks of early printing and illustration to Princeton; he also gave Princeton a collection of early American fiction, the emphasis, in terms of quantity, being on novels of the 1850s. He began buying American fiction from various antiquarian booksellers in the 1940s; his purchases were extensive and he was well ahead of the market. He catalogued the earlier purchases, and a typewritten volume exists covering his collecting in this field from 1948 to 1954. Carbon copies enabled him to have four copies in all; one of the four he sent to Clarence Brigham.

His correspondence, successively, with Brigham, with Clifford Shipton, and with Marcus McCorison, has the air of a man at home with friends whom he greatly respects and admires. He once wrote McCorison, 'I get more accurate information from you more quickly than from anyone else.' In the last years of his life he several times responded to McCorison's requests for funds to help make special acquisitions—\$2,000 toward Jeremiah Condy's manuscript account book,

\$500 toward the Philadelphia, 1777, edition of *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*. His reply to the request to underwrite the purchase of the two volumes of Milton, which were already at the Society, was typical of the man. He wrote, 'It seems to me that you have made an excellent purchase' and went on, 'I have just returned from a rather expensive Western trip to a world which seems full of all sorts of perplexing financial problems, and I don't feel that I should take on 100% of the purchase price. However, I will be glad to take on one half of it.' With a quiet, lively interest in people, books, and the world at large, Sinclair Hamilton managed to keep his way of life intact to the very end. His skill at coping with old age and his success in maintaining control over his life were not the least of his achievements in a lifetime of almost a century.

Sinclair Hamilton Hitchings

MICHAEL PAPANTONIO

Michael Papantonio was born into an Italian immigrant family in Union City, New Jersey, on February 25, 1907. He spent his childhood in Myerstown, Pennsylvania. The family moved to New York City in 1919; there Mike attended high school, and began his career at the Brick Row Bookshop at the age of sixteen. In 1937 he opened his own business at 509 Madison Avenue and began to specialize in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century English literature. When the Second World War brought the rare book business to a halt, Mike closed the shop and joined the Army Medical Corps, leaving his wife, Eleanor, whom he had married in 1934, to carry on the business in a limited way from their home in Yonkers.

After the war, Mike joined forces with his friend and fellow bookseller John S. Van E. Kohn to establish the Seven Gables Bookshop at 3 West 46th Street in New York. John was as

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