

\$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

well versed in American literature as Mike was in English. Their combined knowledge plus their reliability, integrity, and kindness drew customers to the third-floor shop without the attraction of a shop window or elegant premises.

It was typical of Mike that he would serve his profession as member of various bookmen's groups. Most important, he helped to found the Antiquarian Booksellers Association of America in 1949, served as chairman of its Middle Atlantic Chapter in 1954-55, and as national president from 1958 to 1960. There is no doubt, however, that he took the most pleasure from his election to the American Antiquarian Society in 1969, jointly with his partner, John Kohn. With characteristic modesty he responded (in part) to the notice of his election thus: 'I hope I can be of sufficient help to the library to warrant membership.'

About the time that Seven Gables opened for business, Mike acquired by chance an elaborately gilt American binding, the *New York Mirror and Ladies Literary Gazette* for 1831. From this start, over the next thirty years Mike would amass a collection of some one thousand American bindings, nearly all gold-tooled and many of them identified as to binder. He accomplished this without the example of earlier collections, without a guide other than Hannah French's pioneering work, in *Bookbinding in America* (1941), and without competition. No one else at that time seemed interested in this aspect of American publishing. As his collection grew, he would display it from time to time to close friends or interested persons. It received its first public notice in 1962, when he was asked to exhibit twenty-five of the bindings at the Grolier Club. Ten years later, following the annual meeting of the Bibliographical Society of America in January 1972 a group of librarians gathered at Mike's Yonkers home to view the collection. From this gathering came a plan to exhibit a selection of the bindings at four eastern institutions: Cornell, University of Virginia, Princeton, and the American Antiquarian Society.

Eleanor Papantonio was present at this meeting of like minds in January. A month later, she was dead of a heart attack, and Mike submerged his grief in intensive work on a catalogue of the show and the arrangement of the myriad details involved in such an undertaking. The exhibit opened at Cornell in October 1972 with a show at The Pierpont Morgan Library added to the roster, and closed at Princeton in May 1973 with a seminar on American bindings attended by an overflow audience. Mike's delight in the success of his exhibition and the book world's interest in his collection was manifest to all who met him during this time.

The catalogue that Mike prepared, with the assistance of Hannah French and Willman Spawn, to accompany the exhibition, describes and illustrates the sixty-two items in the exhibition. These are less than a tenth part of the collection which would come as Mike's gift to the American Antiquarian Society in instalments in 1975, 1976, and 1977, and in a final portion after his death. While Mike bought early American bindings when he could, his especial interest lay in the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century work, in extra-gilt bindings and ticketed examples (both more common in the later period). He often stated that he was willing to buy any American binding with a ticket or other kind of documentation of its maker. (This made it easy to provide him with birthday and Christmas presents, and a number of handsome bindings joined his collection by this route.) Mike's collection is visually quite splendid, in color, gilt, and condition, but its value to the American Antiquarian Society lies in the documentation available for so many of the examples, which will make it a preeminent resource for students of American bookbinding, publishing, and aesthetics.

In outward appearance Mike was shy, retiring, slight of build, a chain smoker. In personality he was scholarly, authoritative (but never domineering), totally honest, and totally generous—the kindest of men. When Eleanor died in 1972, he

moved from Yonkers into an apartment near the shop, where he frequently entertained friends from all aspects of the book world. John Kohn's death in 1976 left him to carry on the shop—he completed the thirtieth anniversary catalogue of Seven Gables which John had begun—but increasing ill health make it impossible for him to continue. He died in New York City Hospital on August 20, 1978, at the age of seventy-one, leaving two sons, Jeremy and André.

Willman Spawn

GEORGE LESLIE STOUT

George Leslie Stout, art conservator and museum director, died July 1, 1978, following surgery in California. He was born in Winterset, Iowa, of Abraham Lincoln and Lulu May (McBride) Stout, on October 5, 1897. He attended Grinnell College from 1915 to 1917, served overseas as an army private from 1917 to 1919, and resumed his education at the University of Iowa, from which he graduated with a B.A. degree in 1921.

After graduation, Stout remained in Iowa City as an instructor in the university's department of graphic and plastic arts, moving on to the faculty of the University of Pittsburgh in 1925. The next year he enrolled in graduate school at Harvard as a Carnegie fellow, earning his M.A. in 1928. Clark University awarded him a Litt.D. degree in 1955.

A pioneer in the application of scientific techniques to the restoration of works of art, Stout served as a research fellow at Harvard's Fogg Art Museum from 1929 to 1933, at which time he became head of its department of conservation. While on the staff of the Fogg, he was also a consultant in conservation to the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum of Boston. In 1947, Stout left Cambridge and Boston to become director of the Worcester Art Museum. He relinquished the Worcester

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